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ECONOMIC HISTORY
OF THE
BOMBAY DECCAN AND KARNATAK
(1818—1868)

BY
R. D. CHOKSEY, M.A., Ph.D.

WITH A FOREWORD BY
PROFESSOR D. R. GADGIL, M.A., M.Litt. (Cambridge)

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FOREWORD

DR CHOKSEY has devoted himself for many years past, to a study of the records relating to the administration of the British during the fifty years immediately after their occupation of the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak. He has found much that was new and of interest in these records. The unpublished material in the records was so informative and ample in regard to the period 1818-1826, that Dr. Choksey felt that the publication of a selection from these was justified. This selection Dr Choksey presents in another volume. The present publication is a study of the events for the half century after the British occupation, based on both published and unpublished records. For a proper appreciation of Dr Choksey's publication, it is necessary to bear in mind that the sources on which he draws are largely official papers and reports, recording the impressions and actions of administrators who were trying to settle a country to which they were foreigners, and with conditions in which they were not previously closely acquainted.

The chief concern of the new administrators was with the settlement of the country: next in importance came the need for the collection of land revenue. Most of the information and reports owe their origin to this need for revenue collection and settlement. Among administrative problems faced by the new rulers, the chief related to the proper regulation of the village administrative machinery. Dr Choksey's review of revenue settlements gives more detailed information than is readily available elsewhere, but confirms the prevalent view regarding the progress of revenue settlements during early British Rule. What he has to say regarding village administration is, however, largely new. The detailed account of the slow deterioration of the village communities and the position of their hereditary officers, will be found perhaps the most interesting part of his work.

The general historical trends revealed by Dr. Choksey's thesis are broadly familiar to all students of this period. The aftermath of disturbed political conditions, a revenue demand which on account of the inexperience of the administrators was continuously pitched too high, and the dragging effect exercised by continuously falling prices—these are the high-lights of the picture. Dr. Choksey adds a great wealth of previously unknown detail, and thus enriches the knowledge of the students. It is clear, however, that for building up a closely connected account his material was not adequate. The documents contained full

information regarding particular aspects or periods or areas only when for one reason or another, the administration was specially concerned with obtaining the information. Periodic, regular, statistical returns except for gross revenue collections, were yet unknown. Therefore, there are large gaps in information which no research on Dr Choksey's part could make up. Moreover, the areas of administration were often changing weights and measures differed from place to place, and most statistical information contained a varying measure of guess-work. The comparability of the data for various periods or regions could not thus be assumed. Because of these difficulties Dr Choksey has refrained from attempting any quantitative measures of changes, or the establishment of quantitative trends. His survey is, however, full, and ranges over a variety of topics. It illustrates with special fullness the difficulties experienced in the transition from one administration to another. Apart from the problems of transition, it exhibits the early beginnings of a number of other problems which are still with us. Attention might, for example, be invited to Dr Choksey's description of educational conditions, or of the irrigation policy of government. It is clear that the general nature of the irrigation problems in Maharashtra and Karnatak was already visualised by the early administrators, and at that time, as until very recently, only the lack of proper financial vision has delayed action.

Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics
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28th September, 1945

D. R. GADGIL

PREFACE

THE period of this research into the early economic history of the Maratha people is interesting as well as difficult. Our labour is to bring to the light of day the struggle of a people in the new economic order after the much admired British law and order had been established. There were difficulties for both the conquered and the conqueror. How these difficulties were faced and solved by the early British administrators is the main theme of our work. Along with these administrative problems is the painful story of the struggle of a people against growing poverty, which increased by leaps and bounds following the years of political peace and internal order.

The topics which an economic history is to embrace are many and varied. The most important of these is the question of land settlement and its taxation. From an economic and financial point of view, the land tax affects the industry upon which 72 per cent of the Indian population depend. Hence our economic history deals with the early failure and triumph of the land assessment, and allied problems. Trade and manufacture shaped anew with the advent of the British. Besides these, such subjects as customs exchange and prices are interwoven in the course of our narrative, with special reference to roads, railways, irrigation, and experiments for the improvement of the growth of raw cotton, silk, and indigo. Hence the purpose of the thesis is not merely a digression on the development of the land settlement in the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak during the first fifty years of British rule, but a uniform narrative of the life of the Maratha people in nearly all its aspects during the years under review.

The entire thesis, as much as is possible, is written from original records. The manuscripts have been faithfully utilised in the body of this work. To make a selection and sift the evidence from voluminous files of correspondence has been a task of no small magnitude. No effort has been spared to make a thorough study of all material available at the Land Records Office, and the Peshwa Daftari. Inquiries for manuscripts were also made at the Bombay Secretariat. The material utilised in this thesis can claim to have been brought to light for the first time. I take this opportunity to thank the Director of Land Records, the Commissioner of Central Division and the Under Secretary to the Government of Bombay Revenue Department, for their permission to examine the records. An extensive study has also been made of the

very valuable Parliamentary Reports found at the Library of the Servants of India Society. I am also thankful to that Library for many other works and reports of value to my research.

I can hardly express my gratitude to the Trustees of the Tata Trust for their very generous publication grant. But for their munificence this labour would never have seen the light of day. I am also thankful to the Trustees of the Eduljee Dinshaw Trust of Karachi, and to the Seth Patel and the N. M. Wadia Trust of Bombay for their valuable monetary contributions. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the University of Bombay for the grant-in-aid received by him from the University towards the cost of the publication of this work.

I am greatly indebted to Professor D. R. Gadgil, M.A., M.Litt. (Cantab.) for his valuable guidance, encouragement, and precious time that he has so kindly given throughout my six years of research on this subject. I am grateful to Mr. S. M. Raja, B.A., LL.B., and Mr. C. B. Shroff, B.A., LL.B., for their endeavour to procure the necessary funds for the publication of this work. It is to their appreciation, interest, and effort that this work owes its publication. Let me not omit to mention Mr. N. V. Sovani, M.A., whose suggestions for Part II of this work were a welcome addition to my knowledge. My warmest thanks are also due to my friends and colleagues, Professor P. R. Bhagwati, M.Sc., and Professor R. D. Choksey, M.A. My grateful acknowledgement is due to Mr. N. R. Romer, B.A., for his help in preparing the index, and the interest he has shown in my work.

In dealing with a range of subject matter so enormous and so complex, and in trying to bring it within manageable compass, my main problems have been those of structure, proportion, and arrangement. To place both masses and details in right contiguity, so that their value and significance may stand forth, has been my chief aim. How far I have succeeded I will leave my readers to judge. I may state that I have criticised the foreign administration, but always on the unimpeachable evidence of their own records, and at times from the evidence of witnesses before Parliamentary Committees whose words could certainly be relied upon. If this work encourages other students to persevere further in this much-neglected branch of history, I shall have cause to be much contented and shall feel that my labour has not been

Poona,
26th September, 1945.

R. D. CHOKSEY.

CONTENTS

BOMBAY DECCAN (Part I)

Chap.		Page
	Introduction	9
I	The Period of Transition (1816-1838)	23
II	Village Communities	60
III.	Land Administration	84
IV.	Bombay Deccan (1838-1868)	121
V.	Condition of the People	180
VI.	Communications (Part I)	192
	Irrigation (Part II)	203
VII	Manufactures (Part I)	213
	Cotton and Silk (Part II)	218

BOMBAY KARNATAK

(Part II)

	Introduction	233
I	Geography and Geology	240
II.	The Period of Transition (1818-1843)	258
III.	The People (Part I)	291
	Trade & Manufacture (Part II)	304
IV	Bombay Karnatak (1843-1868)	308
V.	Communications (Part I)	325
	Irrigation (Part II)	335
VI.	Cotton, Silk and Indigo	343
	Epilogue	353
	Bibliography	359
	Graphs	facing 154
	"	" 178
	Maps	" 212
	"	" 244
	Graphs	" 320
	Maps	" 324
	"	" 334

INTRODUCTION

(1795-1817)

"IN THESE days sober students of history leave the oft-told stories of war and battle, and busy themselves rather with questions of social life, public and private economics and the history of religion, moral and scientific inquiry."¹

It is on the economic life of the part of the people of a sub-continent like India, that our theme now dwells. It is a narrative of the early economic history of the conquered and the conqueror. Its many failures and its few triumphs form the thread of our narration.

But no theme, especially that which deals with the struggle for existence, can be complete without an historical retrospect. The Bombay Deccan, the last remaining patrimony of the fast decaying Maratha Empire, now at the commencement of our story, fast approaches those years of transition (1795-1811) that marked the close of the Maratha history and the remarkable beginning of a foreign rule.*

It was by 1813 that the last remaining tract of the country—the Bombay Deccan—was added to the extensive territorial holdings of the British in India, the fall of the Maratha Empire is the oft-told story of disunity and internal dissensions, that have ere now been responsible for the fall of many an Empire.

We cannot in justice deny that the last of the Peshwas had in him all the qualities of a Prince unworthy to handle the unfortunate circumstances of the fast decaying and rebellious kingdom. At the same

¹ "Rome," Ward Fowler, p. 88.

* "The Great Empire which England has established in the East will be the theme of wonder to succeeding ages. That a small island in the Atlantic should have conquered and held the vast continent of India as a subject Province, is in itself a fact which can never be stated without exciting astonishment. But the astonishment will be increased when it is added that this great conquest was made not by the collective force of the Nation, but by a company of merchants, whom, originally vested with a character of exclusive commerce and with privilege and right to protect their property by arms, were in a few years by the enterprise and ambition of their agents, the hostile and rival spirit of other Nations of Europe, and the weakness and perfidy of the Princes of Asia, to whom they became by their encroachments or their riches, an object of jealousy and plunder, hurried into possession of royal power, and actually found themselves called upon to act in the character of sovereign over an extended kingdom before they had ceased to be the Merchantile Directors of petty factories."—"Political History of India," J. Malcom, pp. 1, 2.

time we cannot fail to notice that the British took full advantage of the unhappy Peshwa's weakness to make the most for themselves.

To make matters worse, the character of Baji Rao was open to strong criticism and condemnation. Well might Mr. Uhtoff, the Assistant Resident at the Court of Poona, write, in 1799, that "the deep dissimulation and treachery of which Baji Rao is capable makes it unsafe to trust him in any important transaction, and has destroyed all confidence in him from those with whom he is most essentially connected....The restless propensity of Baji Rao to deceive and betray has deprived him of the confidence, affection, esteem, and attachment of every individual, and his ruin will be the inevitable result."²

The profound weakness of the Peshwa was well understood by Elphinstone,³ who played, as we shall see, an important part in the annexation of the Peshwa's territory. He knew Baji Rao to be at the head of an unpopular party, and, educated in prison, he had little sympathy with the bulk of his nation and little desire for any enterprise in which he might require their assistance. His wish was to gratify his love of power and of revenge, without endangering his safety or peace.

His selfish motives and weak policy were responsible, within a few years of his accession to the musnud, of leading him to sever his connections with almost all his Jagirdars, and those who had been connected with the Government of his predecessors were discarded; the nobles who held lands were either dispossessed or kept at a distance and obliged to yield implicit obedience; the chiefs who commanded his army were left in want; the Court came to be composed of new men, and the few remaining troops were commanded by upstarts.

Elphinstone acknowledges the advantages of this erroneous policy of the Peshwa to the English cause "The number of Jagirdars has been lessened; the pride of the Nation has been humbled and its mili-

² "Poona Affairs, 1797-1801" (Palmer's Embassy), Sardesai, p. v.

³ "As Elphinstone pointed out, 'If he were less deficient in courage, he would be ambitious, impetuous, inflexible and perseverant.' He was 'eager for power,' but wanting 'the boldness necessary to acquire it, tenacious of authority, though too indolent to exercise it'; concessions encouraged him to persevere, and opposition only increased his obstinacy unless it operated 'on his fears.' At the same time he was 'scrupulously just in pecuniary transactions, humane when not actuated by fear or revenge, brutal but not parsimonious in his expenses, and at once courteous and dignified in his manners.' Grant Duff also testifies to his skill in riding and swordsmanship and his knowledge of the *Shastras*."—"Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Dr. Gupta, pp. 204, 205.

tary strength reduced—that progress has, however, been favourable to us.”⁴ The discontented flocked to the English side, with the result that a regular army of malcontents was formed, ever anxious to overthrow the Peshwa.

Baji Rao II (1796-1818) succeeded to the musnud not without trouble and intrigue.⁵ The last of the Peshwas was destined to be a pawn in the hands of his powerful feudatories whom fortune favoured. “Now Holkar was uppermost, now Sindhia; and the wretched Peshwa, Baji Rao, was the mere sport of the contending faction.”

The period (1798) when Sir John Shore left India, though considered a season of peace, could not be regarded by any person, who was in the know of the true circumstances, as one of security. The first of the events in point of time and importance was the death of Nana Furnavis. The year 1800 was momentous for Baji Rao, for, with the death of Furnavis “departed all wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government.” After Nana’s death, it was Sindhia who managed the Peshwa’s administration.

The Earl of Mornington, better known to history as the Marquis of Wellesley (1798-1805), commenced a very active interference in the affairs at the Court of Poona. The Period of Transition (1795-1811) received acceleration, reaching its climax in the Treaty of Bassein (1802), that virtually set aside all future independence of the Peshwa. Thence forward, in rapid succession, a series of events culminated in casting Baji Rao into the arms of the bear whose death-embrace was the only solution to his hopeless struggles.

The rivalry between Sindhia⁶ and Holkar, the latter holding the Peshwa in tutelage at Poona since Nana’s death, hurried the events by casting Baji Rao into the English arms, whose aid he was driven to solicit against his overpowering and dictatorial subjects. The disintegration which this jealousy of the rival chiefs created among the

⁴ “Territories Conquered From the Peshwa,”—Elphinstone, p. 19.

⁵ “The demise of the Peshwa on 27th October, 1795, occasions the most serious divisions among the Maratha Chiefs whose interests were deeply involved in the succession.”—“Political History of India,” Malcolm, p. 146. Uhtoff, the Assistant Resident, says on the 4th December, 1797, that “on the whole, the prospect of a happy and permanent settlement of affairs here is as faint and distant as ever”—“Poona Affairs, 1797-1801,” Sardesai, p. v.

⁶ “Daulatrao Sindia, with an Imperial bent of mind and activity of body, displays but little of either greatness or goodness, and is said to have been of late addicted to debaucheries which have already affected his constitution.”—“Poona Affairs, 1797-1801,” Sardesai, p. v.

Maratha States, appeared to Lord Wellesley to constitute a most favourable crisis for compassing the complete establishment of British interests at the Court of Poona.

The defeat of Sindhia and his flight left the Peshwa in his panic-stricken capital⁷ to face the victorious armies of Holkar fast approaching Poona. The Peshwa, as the British Resident wrote, "was not much master of his own will." On the 14th October, 1801, the Peshwa secretly sent Rughunathrao to the Resident to enter into a defensive alliance with the Company.

While the Peshwa, who fled from Poona, was at Bassein, Holkar placed Warnack Rao as a tame claimant for the office of the Peshwa.⁸ Baji Rao was to sign a treaty with the Company, which was to be the price of his restoration. He was to agree to subsidize a body of British troops consisting of six native battalions with their due proportion of artillery men, ordinance, and stores, and to grant lands for the subsistence of the corps from his territory bordering on the Tungbadhra. This force, to be permanently stationed in the Peshwa's territory, was to be employed only on defensive principle of action. Besides, it was specifically mentioned that this body of troops could be employed "for the purposes of chastising such of his dependents as were engaged in an obstinate rebellion against his authority." The British Government would, besides, give the Peshwa a free hand in dealing with his "relatives, servants, and subjects," while the Peshwa, on his part, would not carry on any hostile measures against the friends and dependents of the Company. A body of the Company's troops was to be constantly kept ready so that the Peshwa could call for military assistance if necessary.⁹ These were some of the important clauses of the subsidiary alliance¹⁰ known to history as the Treaty of Bassein (1802).

⁷ "The panic which the victory of Fatesing caused at Poona was extreme. In the city and around it, the Peshwa's Government was virtually suspended, and panic reigned. 'I cannot describe to Your Excellency (Highness)', the Resident wrote to the Governor General, 'the melancholy scenery which this place at present exhibits. The assessments on the city are carried on with the hope of securing their property. On the roads they were generally met by Pindharis, who plundered and abused them. These bandits carry their depredations to the very outskirts of the city, and cultivation on the ground is unprotected; the ryots are cutting it in unripened state as the only means of saving something from the crop.'—Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 34.

⁸ "Life of Wellesley," Hutton, p. 85

⁹ "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, pp. 36, 37

¹⁰ "191—What opinion have you formed of the general nature and character of our subsidiary treaties in India and their effect on the good Government in the respective territories to which they relate?"

As regards the actual carrying out of these terms, Mr. Sardesai mentions that though this large subsidiary force was maintained at the Peshwa's expense and for his service only, "yet not once was he allowed its use even in his sorest need of putting down his disobedient Jagirdars. One cannot but admire the vigilant care and diplomatic skill with which the residents prevented not only any actual harm to their own interests, but any healthy reform of the Maratha Government."¹¹

Thus, 1802 marked the decided turn of events in British favour. Whatever verdict English historians may give regarding these means adopted of acquiring alliances, it must be recorded that the means were far from generous or fair; their only defence being a political necessity, and that generosity was no part of politics. To Lord Wellesley the Company had obtained, for the first time, something like rational

"I may state that our subsidiary alliances appear to me eminently calculated to strengthen our Military and Political power in India. How far they may be conducive to the internal good Government of the several States with which we are connected must depend entirely on the use we make of our alliance over the administration of those States."—Colonel Munro, 27th March, 1832, "Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee, 1832," p 19

"517.—Although you are not in the Courts of any of our independent alliances you must have heard a great deal of current opinion with respect to the subsidiary system, I should think?"

"I heard a great deal of opinion certainly."

"518.—What was the particular objection to it?"

"The objection was that they tended to impair the vigour of the Native Government and destroy the independence of the Princes, and gradually to bring those Native States under our subjection, that was considered to be the effect of those native alliances. I am myself disposed to think that the evils that have been so exclusively ascribed to the alliances rather than the misuse, ought to have been ascribed to the misuse."—William Chaplin, 8th March, 1832, "Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee," p 57

Letter from B. S. Jones to the Right Honourable Charles Grant, 1st August, 1832

"The anomalies and divided system of authority which these subsidiary alliances create, can only operate as a fertile source of disorder..."

"Possessing a real superiority, but affecting inferiority, the British Government can ill brook the slightest opposition to its will. Decked out in nominal ostentatious mockery, the native ruler is apt to regard the enlightened interposition of British authority as a direct violation of his rights, the remembrance of which he cherishes with a ranking of animosity which frequently breaks out in rebellion."

"Conscious of our superiority and thoroughly impressed with the belief that it will be exercised at a convenient period for the purpose of aggrandisement, they regard our power with fear and distrust. Impelled by these feelings and convinced that their reign is altogether transitory, they exert every energy in collecting a treasure which may serve as a resource in the hour of need..."—Appendix No. 20 from "Minutes of Evidence," Vol VI, Political and Foreign, 16th August, 1832, pp. 210, 241

¹¹ "Residency Records, 1801-1810," Sardesai, p. xiv

security in Western India. "A new power had been thrown into the weight of its own scale; a lawful right was established to interfere in the preservation of the Peshwa's authority."¹² All that the treaty did, we know, was to place the Peshwa at British mercy, and the remaining years were those of continued struggle for Baji Rao to free himself from the meshes of a worst tutelage than the one from which he had been freed, namely, that of his powerful feudal lords.

Daulatrao Sindhia was defeated and signed a treaty on 30th December, 1803; Holkar signed his alliance in 1805, so that by the time Wellesley was recalled, the Court of Poona was sharing its sovereignty in diminishing proportions with the Company.

Lord Cornwallis, on his arrival in India in 1805, was no longer the administrator and soldier he had been in the past. He had almost come to look upon the worst peace as better than the best war, and was willing to listen to the pleasant words of his admirers who hailed him as the saviour of India.¹³ Lord Cornwallis, during his tenure, took no measures of importance regarding the Court of Poona. On his arrival at Fort William, he wrote to the Peshwa, reminding him of the principles of his former Government, and professing the greatest moderation and desire to remove from his mind the impression which the late events might have produced.¹⁴

Cornwallis, with the anxiety of a dying man, concluded treaties with Sindhia and Holkar, reversing the policy of the late Governor General. "To such disgraceful pusillanimity," says Smith, "had the victor of Seringapatam sunk in his old age." Within four months of his arrival, he died at Ghazipur on October 5th, 1805. This had been a period of respite to the Peshwa to set his house in order, but to no avail.

Sir George Barlow (1805-1807), called upon to make changes in the Treaty of Bassein, advised the Court of Directors to renounce any such notion of relaxation in the stipulations. He feared that the changes in the treaty would weaken and subvert the British influence at the Court of the Peshwa. Besides, any renunciation or changes in the Treaty would encourage hostile designs with a view to recovering the lost territory,¹⁵ and in carrying out this scheme the Marathas, as Barlow

¹² "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 66.

¹³ "Oxford History of India," Smith, p. 608

¹⁴ "Political History of India," Malcolm, p. 352.

¹⁵ "For the payment of troops, the Peshwa ceded in perpetuity to the Company, territories in detail in the Schedule yielding an income of twenty-

feared, would have the efficient co-operation of the French. Besides, Barlow wrote that "with reference to the correspondence with the Resident at Poona, that whatever may have been the original reluctance . . . to accede to the stipulations of the Treaty, . . . he now considers his welfare to depend entirely on the maintenance of those stipulations, and we are satisfied that the Peshwa has no desire . . . for the modification of the treaty."¹⁶ Such, at least, was the information supplied to the Home Government by her officials on the spot.

It was more than obvious by the behaviour of the Peshwa that he was anxious to secure some freedom from British interference. Baji Rao threatened and controlled through mercenaries his rebellious Jagirdars, little knowing that he served the British purpose of separating himself from his powerful subjects, whose aid would alone save the situation for him in the future. This active interference of Sir Barlow and his wise policy of allowing the Peshwa to handle his Jagirdars all by himself, won for him the compliments of Sir Malcolm when he said, "He wisely withheld from application to the Court of Poona . . . the principles of non-interference upon which he acted in Hindustan."

The unhappy dissensions that are a marked feature of the unfortunate history of Maharashtra in the closing years (1807-1817), gave the new Governor General, Lord Minto, opportunities to actively interfere, under the guise of arbitrator, in the affairs of the Poona Court. The Peshwa, during Minto's tenure, showed on several occasions a disposition to revive the federative relations of the Maratha States, but was repressed by the Governor General.¹⁷ The question that next required an active interference was that of the Jagirdars and their differences with the Peshwa.

In 1811, Mountstuart Elphinstone arrived at Poona and took over the charge of the Residency. A strange destiny awaited to make Elphinstone play a prominent part in the history of Maharashtra. The scheme suggested by Elphinstone for the settlement of the claims of the Peshwa and his Jagirdars was approved of by the Governor General and "preparations were secretly begun to avoid giving any notices

six lacs of Rupees. The Peshwa relinquished forever his right over the City of Surat, and it was agreed that a piece of land yielding a revenue equal to the Peshwa's loss should be deducted from the territory ceded by him" "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p 45.

¹⁶ Despatch of 1st June, 1806, from Malcolm's "Political History of India" pp 381, 382.

¹⁷ "Political History of India," Malcolm, p. 306

to the Southern Chiefs."¹⁸ Elphinstone concluded the treaty¹⁹ so successfully, that the English were the arbitrators in all future disputes between the Peshwa and his powerful nobles. The most unfortunate and lasting injury to the Maratha cause by these dissensions was that while the unhappy Baji Rao gasped for relief from the British clutches, his powerful subjects (Jagirdars), who could have aided him, looked on.

Lord Minto's tenure of office (1807-1813) marked the culmination of the Maratha power; the balance of power in the Deccan since 1800 was a matter for the Company to settle. The Marquis of Hastings' (1813-1823) "forward policy," as far as the Court of Poona was concerned, found its best exponent in the Resident--Mountstuart Elphinstone

The failing power of the Peshwa from 1796 to 1811 bears an ample testimony to the weakness of the Maratha Empire, and the seeds of internal dissension partly sown by the clever pupils of Machiavel, bore a harvest beyond their dreams--the annexation of the Bombay Deccan within the next six years (1811-1817).

"On the long role of diplomatists and administrators in the service of the East India Company, no name possesses a greater charm than that of Mountstuart Elphinstone." As a distinguished diplomat he exercised a decisive influence upon the fate of Western India. What Sir Thomas Munro did in Madras, Elphinstone did in Bombay.²⁰ He came to India in early life (1796), and was Political Secretary to the Duke of Wellington in 1803. In 1810 he was sent on a political mission to Afghanistan, and became a Resident at the Court of Poona in 1811 on the death of Colonel Close.²¹ The disappointed diplomat from Afghanistan little knew what an important part destiny had called him to play in Maharastra.

The peculiar duties of a British Resident were of a difficult nature, and no proper definition could be given to the limits of his interference in the politics of the Native Court to which this dignitary might be attached. According to Elphinstone's biographer, "the duties of the

¹⁸ "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 91

¹⁹ For the terms of the treaty see "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," pp. 94, 95, as well as Malcolm's "Political History," p. 397

²⁰ "Economic History of British India," R. Dutt, p. 15

²¹ "You have been Governor of Bombay?"—I have

"What other situations have you held in India?—I was for the first four years Assistant to the Judge at Benares and in the College in Bengal; I then went as Assistant Secretary to the Resident at Poona, I then went as

British Resident at a Native Court are rarely confined to the ordinary functions of a diplomatic representative.²²

"Active interference in the external and internal politics," wrote Colebrooke, "can scarcely admit of complete definition under any government, still less in Eastern state, which rests on the power of the sword."²³ With his functions so inadequately defined, the Resident often actively interfered with the doings of Native Princes and frequently provoked the intense displeasure of the Native Court. Often the States in those years of disintegration were badly governed, and the Resident, "impelled by an irresistible desire to do good, could not remain an indifferent spectator."²⁴ A military force was called to avert the impending evil so that the British "interposed as umpires and decided as dictators."²⁵ This pernicious interference was always veiled under the garb of doing some good, both to the ruler and ruled. But when this veil was torn aside, the truth might be spoken in the words of Henry Tucker, a worthy member of the Board of Directors:

"The first step was a false one. We have no right to assume that the people of India are incapable of governing themselves in their own way. When their Princes enjoy real independence, they are under the restraint of public opinion—they are liable to be checked, and even controlled by their nobles and military chiefs—they have feelings in common with their subjects, sympathy for their misery—they are alive to the charms of praise and renown, and not insensible to the value of those qualities which it commands. The restraint may not be effectual, nor the motives to good conduct so powerful as it is desirable they should be; but it is a mistake to suppose that popular opinion has no influence in India, or that the elements of an organized society are wanting

"When we interpose, the charm is dissolved. A military force is all in all—it resolves all questions, supersedes all responsibility—and

a sort of Political Assistant or Secretary with the Duke of Wellington; from that I was made Resident at Nagpur, afterwards Acting Resident at Poona, where I continued till the breaking out of the war with the Peshwa. I was Commissioner of the conquered territory, and for the last eight years Governor of Bombay"—"East India Papers, 1830," p. 151

22 "Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," E. Colebrooke, p. 23.

23 "Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," E. Colebrooke, p. 21.

24 "Memorials of Indian Government," H. Tucker, p. 245.

25 Ibid., p. 216

the Native Princes, secluded in the recesses of the zenana, leave the world to Ceasar."²⁶

The events which occurred at Poona in the first three years (1813-1816) of Lord Hastings' administration, demand much of our attention as being the ground of those subsequent measures which terminated in the extinction of the Peshwa's rule, and the final subversion of the Maratha confederacy, of which the Peshwa was the nominal head.

The relations between the Peshwa and the British Resident after 1802, were somewhat defined by the Treaty of Bassein. The Peshwa, on his part, was anxious for British aid against his rebellious feudatories, "mixed with some obscure dreams of recovering the old authority of the Peshwa";²⁷ while the "cunning British Resident could not fail to see through the petty schemes of the Peshwa; and here his judgment never failed."²⁸

The Peshwa, though bold in intrigue, was a coward in action, and his ambition, though great, was curbed by constant fear. This strange mixture of opposites produced a conflict in his mind which constantly exposed him to the designs of his worthless favourites. He soon took for his counsellor one Trimbakji Danglia, who is stated to have "pandered to the vices of his Chief,"²⁹ and though there may have been some truth in this accusation, it was more than clear that he was excessively devoted to the interests of his master.

On one occasion, to show this excessive devotion, he told Elphinstone that "should my master order me, I would kill a cow," an assertion, according to Colebrooke, "of servility and profanity which could not be exceeded." Malcolm goes further and states that the Peshwa "at last fell into the hands of one of the most profligate and wicked of men, who, acting upon a perfect knowledge of his character, gained complete ascendancy over this unfortunate Prince and led him step by step through crimes, treachery, and war, to his downfall."³⁰

Such a personality was poison to British interests at the Court of Poona. Besides, it appears that considerable secret correspondence was

²⁶ This document forms a part of the collection of papers of Henry Tucker, which include a number of others bearing on British encroachments in various parts of India. And though, as the Editor of these papers wrote that "some men differed from the opinions expressed, all appreciated the sincerity and admitted the ability with which he enforced them."

²⁷ "Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," Colebrooke, p. 25.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ "Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," Colebrooke, p. 23.

³⁰ "Political History of India," Malcolm, p. 468.

being carried on between the Peshwa and his feudatories, which, according to the Treaty of Bassein, and the one with the Jagirdars, could not be fair, unless the Resident was informed of it.³¹ Elphinstone had made up his mind that Baji Rao was under no circumstances to restore his lost leadership of the Maratha confederacy and hence kept a close watch on the movements of the Peshwa.

There is ample evidence to show that the British Resident had a vast espionage system, though it was the Peshwa alone who was blamed by him for fraud and intrigue.³² It is, of course, doubtful on which side was the greater guilt, but judging from the value of the stake, one cannot in justice deny that, whatever means was employed by the Peshwa, was done in defence of his crown and liberty; while, on the other side, there lay the greed and desire to extend further exploitation of the fair plains of the Deccan.

These were the relations of the Peshwa with the Resident in 1815, when the coming of Gangadhar Sastry, from the Court of Baroda, to settle a long standing debt with the Court of Poona under British protection and arbitration, hurried the long-awaited crisis. The nature of Sastry's employment was not clear, and though accepted as the Dewan of Baroda by the British, he was to all intents and purposes never appointed as such.³³ It could be shown that Gangadhar was a friend, and

³¹ "Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," Colebrooke, p. 22

³² "At Poona Elphinstone had maintained a well organized Secret Service Department which kept the Resident informed about the movements of the Peshwa. The person who rendered most valuable service to help Elphinstone in procuring secret intelligence from the Peshwa's Court was a Maratha Brahmin named Balaji Pant Natu. The very reason for which Grant Duff considered him well entitled to a munificent reward which was conferred on him, gave his name a bad odour among his countrymen...."

"Besides Balaji Pant Natu, the accounts of the Secret Intelligence Department of the Poona Residency contained other interesting names,—one, Ganesh Pant, who accompanied the Peshwa to Nasik and Pandharpur, was paid Rs400 on the 2nd July, 1816. Ganesh Pant's salary was Rs.15 a month, and the previous grant probably included some extra expenses incurred in connection with the services. Other notable persons in the pay of the Resident were the Angria's Dewan Bapu Bhatt, the Chitnavis of Satara, the Peshwa's Karkun at Nasik, and Prabhakar Balalal, the former vakil of Amrit Rao. Bapu Bhatt received Rs.500 in April, 1817, and 'Khilats' of the same value were given to the Chitnavis of Satara and the Peshwa's Karkun at Nasik. The names of the people of less importance do not appear in the account. They were paid through Capt. Briggs or his Agents. In this way a number of Peshwa's officers had been bought off. One can understand the indignation of the Maratha Chronicler, when he stated that there was hardly any chief in the Peshwa's service who had not been won over by British money."—Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Dr. Gupta, pp. 161, 163

³³ "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Dr. Gupta, pp. 161, 163.

once a servant, of the Bombay Government, and owed his position at Baroda to the British.³⁴ In 1807 the Bombay Government had conferred on him the grant of a palanquin. In the same year, through the mediation of the British Government, the Gaikwar granted Sastry a suitable commission for effecting a saving in the military expenses of the State, and in 1813 was appointed to a situation in the Government of Baroda. In these and various ways Sastry was indebted for favours to the Bombay Government. It will now be seen that Sastry in death repaid the British more than he would have done if alive.

Gangadhar Sastry was murdered in Poona. The last and important act of the drama had begun. The usual clarion call of the British sense of justice, accompanied by a threat of arms, drove the Peshwa into an effort to rid himself of this galling tutelage, which resulted in the closing of the Maratha history at Poona.

Elphinstone, who was at Ellora when the murder took place, on his return to Poona, addressed a memorial to the guilty Court, calling for the punishment of the authors of the crime. It recapitulated the proofs and presumption of the minister in the murder and thus proceeded:

"On all these grounds, I declare my conviction of Trimbakji Danglia's guilt, and I call upon Your Highness to apprehend him as well as Govind Rao Bundoji and Bhugwunt Rao Gykwar, and to deposit them in such custody as may be considered safe and trustworthy. Even if Your Highness is not fully convinced of the guilt of these persons, it must be admitted that there are sufficient grounds for confining them; and I only ask of you to do so, until His Excellency, the Governor General, and Your Highness shall have an opportunity of consulting on the subject. I have only to add my desire that this apprehension may be immediate."³⁵

In no account of this painful incident of the murder of the Baroda Minister, is there any but circumstantial evidence that Trimbakji was

Among the letters in the Deccan Commissioner's files I came across letter No. 1364 of 30th May, 1822, to Wm. Chaplin, from the Collector of Poona.
"Sir,

I have the honour to prefer a request from Ballajee Punt Nathoo that the rent of a garden which he holds for 25 rupees per annum should be excused to him. He is said to be a notoriously deserving man and a very faithful servant of our Government, but his name and character are, no doubt, well known to you. He enjoys large grants in Enam from our Government and this would be a very small additional favour."

³⁴"Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 163.

³⁵"Memoirs of Mountstuart Elphinstone," Colebrooke, p. 25

INTRODUCTION

the guilty party, though it must be stated that so well was the case put up by the Resident that at least morally, if not legally, we are convinced. To Colebrooke, Elphinstone's biographer, "nothing was more easy than to trace the murder to the Minister of the Sovereign."³⁶ For evidence as to the guilt, he gives us "the invitation repeated to the unwilling victim to join him in the temple, the preparations for the journey, the known cause of the enmity, all impels the popular voice . . . to decide who was the immediate author of the deed."³⁷ There could not have been a more fortunate incident to enable Elphinstone to lay hands on this thorn at the Court of Poona, that had caused an untold amount of painful anxiety to the British so far.

Trimbakji did not long remain in prison. His escape made matters worse, for there was no doubt that the erstwhile Minister soon got in communication with Baji Rao. The Peshwa had at his disposal no less than eight millions of treasure in jewels and in species, and he laid himself out to gain over, by bribery, every servant of the Residency.³⁸ But misfortunes dogged his steps, for those who took his gold were already in the pay of the Resident!. So complete was Elphinstone's information on every occasion, that one of the charges levelled by Baji Rao against Sir Malcolm was that "he was so completely watched that Elphinstone knew the very dishes that were served at his meals."

The Peshwa at first resisted all interference and refused to have Trimbakji recaptured. Then followed the woeful tale of threats and admonitions of the Resident, and entreaties and cunning on the part of the Peshwa. This was a golden opportunity, and Elphinstone had made up his mind to make the most of it. It can be seen from certain jottings in his diary that the Resident expected a change in the turn of the monotonous events that had so far fallen to his lot at the Poona Court. He comments in his diary on May 9th, 1817, to the following effect: "I spent the day in the Camp and came home in the evening. We must now have a new era or a repetition of the same course, ending in the Peshwa's ruin. I have taken to writing politics in my journal of late, which must not be often done."³⁹ The Peshwa's refusal to act according to the Resident's wishes, could now plead as giving Elphinstone "an unquestionable right to exact penalty for acts," according to Colebrooke, "of such scarcely disguised hostility."

³⁶ Ibid., pp 27-39

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ "Life of Elphinstone," E. Colebrooke, p 25.

A month after the 9th May, the date when the above jotting had been committed to the diary, the Peshwa was beaten to the wall and agreed to give up his favourite, and signed a humiliating treaty⁴⁰ on the 18th June, 1817. The terms of the treaty were so severe that even Malcolm states that they were never meant to be carried out. The Peshwa protested that the new treaty cut for him such a narrow path that it was scarcely possible for him to keep it without swerving.⁴¹ The new conditions were so irksome to bear that obedience to them

Gradually the Resident closed the nets around the unfortunate Baji Rao till, like an animal at bay, he risked in one grand throw his crown and liberty.⁴³

⁴⁰ See "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Dr. Gupta, p. 157, and "Political History of India," Malcolm, p. 497.

⁴¹ "Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 157.

⁴² "But a treaty like this would hardly last. The unwilling Peshwa had been forced into submission; resistance had been overcome with threat, but it had not been broken. The new terms made the British control more difficult to resist and more irksome to bear.... Even after the treaty the Governor General looked upon the Peshwa as a subjected and unreconcilable enemy, and what the treaty achieved was not a re-establishment of friendship but a temporary postponement of hostility. However annoyed the Governor General might have been at what he had called the Peshwa's persevering perfidy, the Peshwa looked upon the British Government as a hated foreign power which had seized a considerable part of India, and was even then threatening his own territory."—"Baji Rao II and the East India Company," Gupta, p. 158.

⁴³ "In such an hour, he said, as this, followers fled, adherents shrunk from their allegiance, and even the ties of relationship and blood were forgotten; a real friend was the only stay such a person could have on earth; such, he believed, he had in me,... and he entreated, with tears in his eyes, that I would contemplate the situation to which he was reduced"—Letter from Sir John Malcolm to John Adams of 3rd June, 1818. "Papers Respecting Pindaray and Mahratta Wars, 1824," p. 350.

CHAPTER I
THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION
(1818-1838)

THE most striking geographical feature of this territory is the formidable range of hills, stretching, with scarcely a break, from the south bank of the Tapti to Cape Comorin, giving the landscape in some places a broken and tumultuous aspect. The huge rugged masses, as they descend into the plain, are shrouded in luxuriant vegetation; while in others they present the appearance of a continuous, naked, sombre, perpendicular wall. It is behind this stupendous natural fortification that Maharastra is situated. No traveller can be unaffected by the appearance of these hills in the monsoon when every window of the train presents a landscape worthy of stirring within us an emotion of awe and grandeur that nature alone in its majesty can make us feel. From the west of the Ghauts the sea is at most points visible; but to reach it from any part of the Deccan, this mountain barrier must at some point be overcome. The wild and rugged grandeur of this scene presents innumerable difficulties to means of communication. The means of descent down these Ghauts, are only found at distant intervals, consisting sometimes of most perilous and breakneck footpaths, which one would think almost too great a venture for even a goat to trust himself. In the days of our narrative, bridle-tracks had been formed, down which, by a lengthened and circuitous course, ponies and pack-bullocks of the Bunjaries might with difficulty be led; while in parts the descent had been made practicable for wheeled carriages and carts. Alexander Mackay, who travelled through Maharastra during the early days, said that it was only at two points, from the Tapti to Cumpta, a line of 500 miles, that one could descend with anything like safety or ascend with ease. Such were the physical features of the territory entrusted to the charge of Mountstuart Elphinstone.

The Proclamation issued on the occupation of the Peshwa's dominion stated that revenue would be collected for the new Government, but all property, real or personal, would be secured to rightful owners. All *wutuns* and *inams*, annual stipends, and all religious and charitable establishments would be protected, and all religions tolerated. The farming system was abolished. Officers would be appointed to collect a regular and moderate revenue, to administer justice and encourage

agriculture. In short, Elphinstone preserved as much as possible the then existing system of administration as the best under the circumstances.

Liberal terms were granted to the Jagirdars. They were called to transfer their allegiance to the Company, and in return assurances were given to continue their rank and dignity enjoyed under the late Government. To the influential Brahmin class the new Government continued the grants and charitable pensions, not merely as policy, but of necessity, to keep as friendly as possible a class in the Maratha society which would feel the greatest bitterness at loss of power. The agricultural classes showed a strong disposition in favour of tranquillity. It was they who had suffered most in those last years of weak and degenerate Government; it was they who had been unfortunate pawns in the ever changing political power with which their country had been burdened now too often; it was they who were the mainstay of every Government, now to see their rank and file increased with people who had, until then, other occupation, thus leading to a heavy burden on the land, their only wealth. The soldier must exchange the sword for the hoe, and leave the hall and barracks for the lowly hut. During the first three weeks the influx into Poona of the followers and troops of the late Peshwa's army, according to Captain Robertson, increased the roll of the unemployed to the figure of 10,000. Three thousand of these were poor Brahmins or Marathas who had been, so far, personal servants of Sirdars. The remaining 7,000 were Purdaseys and Concubines who had attended their chiefs till the fall of the Peshwa. Such was the condition and fortune of several thousands who returned to their native villages.

The new system of land revenue did not, at first, essentially differ from that which had been followed under the Maratha rule. The Bombay Deccan was almost entirely a rural tract, and must depend on the rains for the maintenance of both animal and human life; and its failure had often made the ryot a prey to the strange caprice of nature. The payment of revenue was fixed by the servants of the Company with reference to the cultivation and receipts of the best days of the Maratha rule. Cows were granted for various years and the Kumal assessment was to be reached within those stipulated years for which the pettah had been granted. In their anxiety to reach the full Kumal assessment, without regard to the burden on land, the failure of rains and the fall in prices, the assessment in 1817 of £800,000 reached £1,150,000 in 1818, and, in a few years, £1,500,000. As usual, disease followed

close on the heels of starvation, and that fell scourge of humanity, cholera, laid a heavy toll, so impoverishing the Deccan that within the first twenty years large tracts of land lay waste and numberless villages were deserted. Low prices, unemployment,¹ heavy taxation, reduced production, and increased indebtedness—all those familiar features of an economic depression were experienced in a very acute form.

The chief sufferers from this depression were the cultivating classes. Under the Marathas they had consumed their own products and paid their dues in kind, and hence did not lose. But now they had to pay in cash the revenue to the new Government and interest to the suwarks. With prices falling so suddenly, due to an increase in cultivation² and greater output, broke the Deccan ryot, and the enhanced burden of the terribly high assessment sapped the vitality of the peasantry.

Added to these factors of increasing depression were the termination of the inflow of precious metals, the rising prices of gold and silver, and the inadequate supply of currency; and the growing demand for its services, due to the replacement of barter by money exchange, produced a harmful fall in prices in the Deccan.

"More than twenty years before the establishment of British rule in Maharastra," says Professor V. G. Kale, "the country was, as we have already stated, in a sad plight owing to wars and misrule, and it is difficult to draw positive conclusions from the information we are able to get. We have, therefore, to be content with making the best use of the material that is available, and form from it such estimates as appear to be warranted."

In the revenue settlement, all the Collectors (Caps. Robertson, Pottinger, Briggs, Grant, and Mr. Chaplin) found a serious hindrance

¹ "The disbanded soldiers, whose number was calculated by Mr. Chaplin at about 30,000, had mostly to fall back upon the family pursuit of agriculture. Thus instead of the earnings of cultivation being added to by those of war, the disbanded soldiers had to be supported out of the produce of a depressed and overstocked industry."—"Indian Journal of Economics," Volume xiv (1933-34), p. 348.

² "To demonstrate this, I may remark that in this collectorship alone, nearly 500,000 (bighas) of ground have been brought into cultivation, and the grain produced by them would feed, at a moderate computation, 30,000 men and 15,000 horses, but instead of having an increase in the 'consumers' to that extent, we may safely calculate that there is a decrease of half the number of men and the whole of the horses. How far this estimate is to be applied generally throughout the country is out of my power to say, but I suspect the inferences to be drawn from it are the same in all quarters."—Letter No. 1475 of 31st August, 1822.

to the progress of their settlement owing to the absence of all proper records, which had ceased to be kept while the farming system was in force; the few available were either untrustworthy or tampered with by the village *patels* or *coolcurnees*. The greatest blunder was committed when the full revenue assessment (*Kumal*) was fixed on the basis of what it had been in the best days of Nana Furnavis' administration. Ample evidence³ is recorded that the Commissioners (Messrs. Elphinstone and Chaplin) had again and again warned the Collectors of the dangers of over-assessment. In the midst of this darkness the first foreign administrators laboured manfully, and be it said in justice that all of them tried their best to meet and surmount the many obstacles that stood in their way.⁴ The revenue had so far been partly levied by direct assessment, called the *Aeen Jumma* (land revenue), and partly by personal cesses, called the *Sewaee Jumma* (extra revenue). To take Sattara under Mr. Grant, we find that revenue was settled on the accounts of thirty or forty years back, and the mamlutdar, on collecting the revenue, was to demand of the coolcurnee the (1) *Zumeen Jhare*⁵ (estimate of the whole village), (2) *Thul Zhara* (register of fields), (3) *Bhot Khut* (list of all persons in villages, koonbies and traders with the taxes they paid), (4) *Tuhseel* (haptas by which revenue is realized) and (5) *Jurtee* (revenue under each head). Each ryot was given a puttah stating his assessment, which was arrived at after due consideration of his field and personal condition. The second item of revenue was the sayer or customs, which, under the Marathas, was farmed out to the highest bidder, who, it appears, as Mr. Briggs⁶ stated, re-divided his farm into smaller groups and sub-let them to his agents. The entire responsibility of the sayer payment always rested with the highest bidder.

In the first two years nearly 80,000 bighas were brought under cultivation, with an increase of Rs.30,000 in the revenue in Poona District alone. This bears out the fact that the burden on agriculture had increased immensely. Added to this burden on land, the years 1823-24 and 1825-26 were years of widespread famine all throughout Maharashtra and even the Carnatic. The letters to and from the Collectors

³ See "Letters on Economic Conditions (1818-1826)."

⁴ It is a matter of good fortune to have had this able and industrious group of men, whose correspondence we have brought to light, to guide the destiny of Maharashtra which was emerging from a period of chaos and misrule. The Letters do not merely show as to how the administrators set about their task of reconstruction, but reveal the late administration in its weakness and strength.

⁵ Letter No. 278 of 17th Aug., 1819.

⁶ Letter No. 953 of 31st October, 1820.

and Commissioners bear testimony to the heart-rending conditions resulting in the desertion of villages, the death of thousands of cattle, lack of forage, dearth of drinking-water, followed with the scourge of disease. The years that were to follow had an ample task to repair the hideous ravages of a calamitous year.⁷ Every exertion was made to tide over these trying times—remissions, *tuckavi*, promises of a decrease in assessment, and the starting of public works, like the repair of roads, was undertaken to keep the peasant from starvation. The Commissioner had impressed upon the Collectors that utmost leniency was to be displayed to meet the difficulty of the ryots. Mr. Chaplin writes, “I have no doubt, whatever may be your opinion in regard to the settlement, that you will consider mine . . . to be entitled to consideration, especially when they lean to the side of moderation in the favour of the ryots.” Again in another place, “My sentiments at different times conveyed to you will have shewn that I by no means wish the assessment to be raised beyond what the ryot can pay without difficulty.” Such were the sentiments of the Commissioner, who throughout his correspondence showed keen sympathy and anxiety for the welfare of the ryots. Whole villages were deserted, and Captain Robertson stated that in the Indapur taluka alone nearly fifty-seven villages were denuded of whole families.⁸ The Collectors were of opinion that such desertions would result in untold loss of revenue not only in that year, but for some years to come. The seasons of 1824-25 and 1825-26 were also a failure, for Mr. Pringle, writing to Captain Robertson, said, “The extreme poverty of the cultivators rendered remissions necessary to the security of the cultivation of the present year.”⁹ It was in 1825 that Mr. Pringle was appointed to carry out such measures of survey and settlement as “was necessary to put matters right.”¹⁰ Mr. Pringle’s survey, started in Junnar and Pabal, spread to Bhimthadi, Purandhar, and Khed by 1831.

The next ten years (1828-1838) are the sad story of the spread of the new survey settlement which played greater havoc in the assessment than the former Kumal settlement.¹¹ The years following the famine were not of a nature to enable the ryot to recoup his lost energy, and matters did not improve, though Mr. Pringle himself proposed

⁷ See Letter No. 1944 of 29th Jan., 1824; Letter No. 7679 of 5th Feb., 1824, Letter No. 7712 of 20th Feb., 1824; Letter No. 2211 of 31st Dec., 1824; Letter No. 5091 of 21st April, 1824; Letter No. 2151 of 13th Aug., 1824.

⁸ See Letter No. 5576 of 31st Aug., 1824.

⁹ See Letter No. 2598 of 25th Jan., 1826.

¹⁰ See Letter No. 2599 of 26th Jan., 1826.

¹¹ See Chapter III.

in 1831 that the assessment should be lowered by one third. In spite of the repeated failure of rain, the prices continued very low, from 33 to 50 per cent below the average of prices.¹² The failure of Mr. Pringle's settlement was laid at the door of his native subordinates, whose fraud and corruption had mismanaged the entire undertaking, and by 1836 fresh steps were to be taken by Mr. Mill, who sanctioned Mr. Goldsmid, then at Indapur, to suggest and carry out a new plan of survey. Accompanying Mr. Goldsmid was the able Captain Wingate, an Engineer Officer who was destined to play a momentous part in the revenue administration of Maharashtra. The new assessment of Mr. Goldsmid and Captain Wingate began in favourable circumstances in 1836. Mr. Mansfield, the principal Collector, gave an encouraging picture of the territory where the new survey had been introduced, especially in Indapur. But Colonel Francis was of the opinion that matters had begun to improve from 1833-34, especially so in Indapur, and therefore little credit may be given to the revised survey settlement.¹³ The new settlement was to remain undisturbed for a period of thirty years.

While such were the fortunes of the Poona District, the Ahmednagar period from 1818-1838 can be divided into two distinct periods of ten years. The first, on the whole, was a time of stagnation so that the remaining ten years (1828-1838) had to be spent in the removal of abuses, and the high price of field produce brought some temporary relief. The earliest report¹⁴ showed the Collectorate to embrace twenty-one sub-divisions, including fifty-three talukas. The gross kumal for 1815-16 was Rs.19,22,288; for 1816-17 it was Rs.18,96,514; and on the advent of the British it fell slightly to Rs.18,67,830. In 1818-19 it stood at Rs.14,85,875. These figures are a testimony to the decline of the revenue and hence the general condition of quite a large portion of the Bombay Deccan. A conjecture at the population gave the figure of 8,28,500. Though the people occupied in various professions numbered 1,55,000, yet the general report, as well as that of the mamlutdars, with the exception of Barsi, Sangamnair, and Junnar,¹⁵ were of the opinion that there were no manufactures worthy of note.

The revenue settlement here, as in Poona, was made with the individual holder. The revenue was collected in six instalments. The

12 "Poona Gazetteer," p. 397.

13 See Chapter III.

14 Report No. 577 of 23rd August, 1819.

15 "Sangamnair was formerly a place of considerable trade in which cloth, paper, swords, etc. were made."

survey was introduced by Mr. Pringle in 1825 and 1828, but never put to any use. Till 1822 the prices were fairly high; but after this *jawari* fell from 30 to 17 seers a rupee. The year 1824 was one of a great famine, and Ahmednagar had its share of the great calamity.¹⁶ Prices, in addition, continued to fall, and in 1826 collections fell to Rs.1,80,000. Mr. Dunlop, the Collector, saw little hope of improvement. The year 1825¹⁷ also experienced a failure of rain. The alarm spread, and many families fled to the Nizam's districts. The situation improved by the month of August, when with the exception of the plains of the Bhima and Godaveri, the Mhawul and Nasik received an abundant supply of rain. By the end of the same month things changed for the better in many parts of the Collectorate.

From 1829 to 1831 the monsoon again failed, and yet the prices of grain remained low. In 1833-34, in consequence of a good season, the revenue was collected to the highest figure in ten years—Rs.13,99,600. In spite of the failure of rain in 1835-36 we find the collection touching the immense figure of Rs.14,36,920.¹⁸ Mr. Harrison wrote in September, 1837, that the condition of the ryots was much depressed. They appeared to be worse off than the people of the Southern Maratha Country. By 1838 the Government was forced to grant a remission amounting to five lacs.

The territory of Sholapur was acquired at various periods between 1818 and 1870. The transference of its talukas from one collectorate to another in these early years makes its history a part of the fortunes of the Ahmednagar district. At the opening of our narrative it is a sub-collectorate, under the principal Collector of Nagar.

Its revenue history up to the survey settlement of Mr. Wingate is a parallel to that of Poona and Nagar. It shared the same misfortunes of 1824,¹⁹ and its painful struggle toward recovery is the oft-repeated

In Barsi "papers of all sorts were made, white and various kinds of ornamented cloth" also. "They also tan and dye leathers which are much esteemed."

"The paper of Jannar was famous in the Collectorate. Matchlocks shields, spears, and swords were also made."

¹⁶ See Letter No. 2001 of 24th Sept., 1824; Letter of 15th Sept., 1824; Letter No. 2034 of 3rd Aug., 1824.

¹⁷ Letter No. 2348 of 9th July, 1825; Letter No. 2362 of 15th Aug., 1825; Letter No. 2369 of 28th Aug., 1825.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Letter No. 2111 of 29th Oct., 1824; Letter No. 2055 of 19th Aug., 1824; Letter No. 2208 of 8th Feb., 1825

story of the Deccan in these early years. In 1825 it appears that the prices of grain had risen very considerably in Kurmallia, Koortee, and Mohale, but due to a sufficient quantity of rain in Sholapur and Barsi, the prices of grain had fallen. Excluding the famine year of 1824-25, the prices of *jawari* averaged 32 seers; it fell in 1826-27 and 1827-28 to 104 seers. High assessment and low prices left their mark here as elsewhere in the first decade of British rule.

Mr. Pringle's settlement came into force in 1830. The year 1832-33 was one of general distress, and prices of *jawari* and *bajri* fell from 41 and 21 to 31 and 27 seers, respectively. The ten years ending in 1838 found Sholapur poverty-stricken, and the standard of comfort had fallen so low that in a year of partial or complete failure, there was no margin left for retrenchment. Some of the villages were a mass of roofless walls; the people had died or fled, due to poverty and lack of means to buy grains.²⁰ All evidence pointed to the fact that the revenue was exacted in spite of the fall of prices.²¹

Captain Grant Duff managed the territory of the Raja of Sattara for the first few years. In 1822²² Captain Grant appears to have made over the internal administration to the Raja. The table of revenue for the first few years gave Rs.13,79,618.1.87 $\frac{1}{4}$ in Fusly 1228; Rs.15,22,463.3.50 in Fusly 1229; Rs.15,82,588.3.62 $\frac{1}{2}$ and Rs.16,43,547.0.15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in Fuslies 1230 and 1231. The revenue in these years showed a total increase of Rs.2,52,814.2.22 $\frac{1}{4}$. Under Captain Grant, Sattara was divided into five distinct divisions,²³—"Waee Soobeh," "Jowleeh Soobeh," "Kurrar Prant," "Kuttad Des," and "Fultun Des." In a list of instructions²⁴ worthy of an able administrator, Grant Duff had requested the mamludars, on taking possession of the district, that it was essential to tranquillize the minds of the inhabitants, and to "assure them of kindness and protection—listen to everything they say and assure every person that due attention shall be paid to what he states." The document inculcated the sacredness of all property, though all Jaghir villages, with the exception of those of the Patwardhans and the Prithee Nidhee were to be taken possession of. Customs were temporarily suspended, but Patdam, Dak and Goodal²⁵ could be levied; besides, hang, drugs,

²⁰ "Land Revenue of Bombay," Vol. I, A. Rogers, p. 72.

²¹ "Sholapur Gazetteer," pp. 318, 319.

²² Letter No. 1544 of 3rd April, 1822.

²³ Report No. 50 of 12th July, 1818.

²⁴ Instructions dated 8th May, 1818.

²⁵ Patdam: A tax of Rs2 levied on persons marrying widows; custom levied by Government on occasions of rejoicing, at these times application was

and liquor were to be taxed according to the old usage. All persons who had served in the late Peshwa's army were to be allowed to return without molestation to their native villages,—“assure them of protection and of consideration every man will meet with from a wise and liberal Government,”—but they were to be warned of the consequences of quitting their villages, for if they dared to do so, orders had been given “to cut them to pieces if they again ventured to take up arms.” The document shows the acumen, intelligence, and ability with which the first administrators set out to win the people and establish a firm hold over the country.

Between 1821 and 1829 Captains Adams and Challen surveyed the State. The years following the British administration required yearly advances to keep up the tillage and save the landholder from ruin.²⁶ The land assessment, as settled by Captain Adams, was as a rule too high, and a certain amount had to be taken off as permanent remission.

During the Indian administration the laxity and unsystematic rule affected Sattara adversely. The accounts were kept on loose paper, waste land entered as cultivated, and lands let at reduced rates recorded as fully assessed.²⁷ Not till 1848, when Sattara passed directly under British rule, do we have a systematic record of its progress and economic history.

The present Collectorate of Nasik was composed partly from the talukas in the Ahmednagar or Khandesh Districts. Here, as elsewhere, the old system of revenue, with the exception of farming, was continued. Mr. Crawford's attempt to measure the land and fix the assessment, undertaken in 1820-21, failed, due to untrustworthy clerks.

During the first three years, high produce prices prevailed, and the country made rapid advance. During the next six years (1821-1827), in spite of the famine of 1824-25, a rapid spread of tillage caused millet to fall from 49 to 79 pounds to the rupee. By 1832 Mr. Andrews could point out the wretched condition of the Chandore taluka as typical of the entire district. In the years 1833 to 1837, the revenue demands appear to have been lightened, but such periodic relief was of little avail, for no sooner was the ryot in a tolerable position than Government re-

made to public authorities for a written permit, and on this a duty was paid of 24 pice for the musicians called “dak” and one rupee on those called “Goondle.”

²⁶ “Sattara Gazetteer,” p. 320.

²⁷ “Land Revenue of Bombay,” A. Rogers, p. 277.

verted to its policy of high assessment.²⁸ In the midst of these trials the New Survey and Settlement began in 1838.

Captain Briggs found the greater part of the Khandesh Collectorate in a depopulated condition; in consequence, general permission was granted to mamludars to give cowle to individual ryots to cultivate new lands on the usual terms under the late Government.²⁹ This was sanctioned by the Commissioner, and Captain Briggs suggested that in the case of waste lands to be brought under tillage, a year's remission was not sufficient, and he was of the opinion, seeing the jungle, that at least three years' remission was necessary before the ryot could expect to turn in a harvest in which the Government might share. In 1822 the rates were fixed on the accounts of the last ten years, according to the nature of the soil. The land had been measured in 1819, but not correctly, yet much concealed cultivation was brought to light. In 1820 the land had been re-measured with greater care and the revenue increased in various talukas by 29, 17, 30, 20, 39 and 11 per cent. Though the Zamindar complained, Mr. Briggs wrote that the increase in percentage was due to much concealed cultivation brought to book. In 1820-21 the measurement was re-taken and tallied with the last year's. To sum up the condition of Khandesh, Captain Briggs, in his reports,³⁰ in 1822, stated (1) that the country was, in itself, in a wretched and depressed state; (2) that the nature of the administration of the past twenty years precluded an acquaintance with the real resources of the soil; (3) and that the tendency of such a state of affairs created confusion in the accounts, a concealment of actual resources, and an aversion to produce any real revenue account from which alone an assessment could be found on fixed principles. Such were the difficulties that were to be faced, and in such a state of darkness unhappy circumstances followed, which could not be laid entirely at the door of the new administrators, but, instead, to the account of the late Government, whose accumulated negligence not only caused the fall of a national independence, but became, in the new economic settlement, the root cause of much evil and mishap.

In 1818 Captain Briggs allowed the bankers to make advances of money to enable the ryots to meet their expenses of cultivation. "This was, in fact, the only alternative I had in the present unsettled state of

²⁸ "The Victorian Age," R. Dutt, pp. 53, 54.

²⁹ Letter No. 204 of 13th Sept., 1818, Letter No. 520 of 8th June, 1819; Letter No. 584 of 24th Aug., 1819; Letter No. 1211 of 13th July, 1822.

³⁰ Report No. 1186 of 20th May, 1822.

the country and with the little knowledge I possess of the people's character,"³¹ wrote Captain Briggs on 16th June, 1818. In September of the same year, Briggs sought the aid of a wealthy citizen, Gunput Rao, to advance money to the ryots of Sultanpur at the rate of 12 per cent, and requested Tuckavi to re-inhabit the 280 villages of Sultanpur since only 116 of them were in a tolerably decent condition.³² The good produce prices of the first two years enabled the ryots to meet the assessment. This, however, fell off owing to a bad season and failure of rain in 1821 Fusly. In the meantime the increased tillage brought so great a quantity of produce into the market that prices fell, and by 1822 something had to be done to relieve the cultivators. The rents must be lowered. With the peace of the last four years Captain Briggs said that to a considerable diminution in the demand, owing to the ravages of cholera, had been added an increase in the number of the agriculturists, and an abundance had been produced which had never been known in the last twenty-five years. These factors, though applied to Khandesh, could be well put up as illustrative of the causes of the general depression in those early years all over Maharashtra. A month after the request to lower the rent by 25 per cent, Captain Briggs requested that the general fall in prices called loudly for a reduction of rent, and he was compelled to promise a consideration.³³ On this request, the Commissioner, besides granting permission for immediate reduction, said that, in spite of his repeated warnings against over-assessment, it was a matter of grave concern that the Collector should have erred.³⁴ Besides, he drew Captain Briggs' attention to the fact that with the extraordinary depression of prices there was also the inequality of the apportionment of the land rent upon individual ryots. To sum up in a few words, the condition of Khandesh, prior to the famine of 1832-33, on the whole was a time of stagnation.³⁵ The years between 1818 to 1828 may be divided into two parts: the first six years were those of a series of bad harvests, and the next four marked a ruinous cheapness of grain due to a bumper harvest, small local demand, and no means of transport.³⁶ From 1828 to 1832 there were fairly abundant harvests, but due to lack of outside demand the markets were soon glutted. From 1833 to 1837 prices continued high; the result was an

³¹ Letter No. 90 of 16th June, 1818.

³² Letter No. 223 of 29th Sept., 1818.

³³ Letter No. 1243 of 25th Sept., 1822.

³⁴ Letter No. 5318 of 24th June, 1823.

³⁵ "East India Papers," Vol. IV, p. 686.

³⁶ "Khandesh Gazetteer," p. 272.

extension of the area under cultivation and a rise in the net collection. This prosperity, as Captain Wingate pointed out later, was fleeting and ephemeral, hence misleading. It was not till 1852 that Captain Wingate entered Khandesh with a view to studying and recommending a new assessment to rescue a fast degenerating province.

Besides the land revenue, which was the sheet anchor of finance in the Deccan, we have already shown that the sayer, or customs, farmed out in the days of the Marathas, and continued by the British, was the second great source of provincial revenue. There were no two opinions regarding the evils of the farming of customs. Captain Briggs, to quote but one, wrote on 16th June, 1818, "The whole machine appears to me so complicated that I should have great difficulty in establishing a new system."³⁷

It appears that as early as 1819 European articles were to be exempted from custom duties.³⁸ These were European shop goods, and all staple European goods, such as iron, steel, etc., were to be charged customs as in the old provinces. The markets of the Deccan were now to receive the mass production of the English manufactures, with far-reaching influence on the few home industries, and an undoubtedly effect on the manufacturing classes who were soon to leave the loom for the plough, and, like the soldier, burden the land. The land was to supply the raw material for the steel giants of Manchester; the millions of India were to be bound to the soil to cultivate for the greed of their new masters that wealth which was to make England the richest country in the world, and the Indian ryot so poverty-stricken as to make it difficult to find a parallel in the world.³⁹ The evidence borne by men who have held eminent positions in the Indian world, either as officials or merchants, has, with few exceptions, agreed that English manufactures did untold harm to Indian industries. Mr. Chaplin, when asked⁴⁰ as to how far British manufactures had supplanted the Deccan

³⁷ Letter No. 90 of 16th June, 1818.

³⁸ Letter No. 500 of 10th July, 1819. Articles to pass free of duty through the province were: wines of all sorts in bottles; beer (cask and bottle); brandy and all other spirituous liquor in bottles; tea, hats, and shoes, broad cloths, European petty supplies, such as pickles and preserves.

³⁹ Professor Green observes, "Under our rule an unheard of proportion of the revenue of the country is spent for foreign commodities. A Governor, a member of Council, a judge, or a Collector does not—as a native ruler would—spend his income on crowds of relatives and hangers on... He requires long-acre carriages, Arabian horses, French and Spanish wines."—"Indian Journal of Economics," Vol. XIV, p. 348.

⁴⁰ "Do the Jagirdars and men of property in the Deccan use British manufactures to any extent?—There has been a considerable use of all articles of

industry, said that they had done so to a considerable extent, except in the manufacture of very coarse cloth used by the lower classes; the better kind of cotton and silk of Indian looms had been very much superseded by English articles; and hence many manufacturers were compelled to resort to agriculture, a department which was already overstocked.

Colonel Sykes, bearing evidence before a select committee in 1832, when questioned if there were any extensive manufactures left in the Deccan, said there were scarcely any, and all that remained were the coarsest cotton cloth and blankets. He had personally taken a list of all cloths in Poona for sale to see where they came from, and he said that he found, to his surprise, that the four Provinces of the Deccan produced scarcely a thing for sale beyond the coarsest articles. Valuable goods either came, he said, from the Jagirdars' territories or from Sindhiha, Holkar, or from Berar, or they were of European fabric. When questioned by the Committee, "Have the manufactures been affected by the importation of British commodities?"—"Very seriously indeed," was his reply. Asked if even the lower classes were wearing British goods, he said they wore both cotton and woollen when they could afford to buy.⁴¹ Within the first twenty years of British dominance, a death blow had thus been dealt to the cottage cotton industry of the Deccan ryot and added another important factor to the growing poverty of the masses in Maharashtra. Mr. Ghandi, in a broadcast to America in 1931, said: "It is a painful phenomenon that those simple villagers, through no fault of their own, have nearly six months in the year idle upon their hands. Time was, not long ago, when every village was self-sufficient in regard to the two primary human wants—food and clothing. Unfortunately for us, when the East India Company, by means which I would prefer not to describe, destroyed that supplementary village industry, then the millions of spinners . . . found themselves one fine morning with their noble occupation gone, and from that day forward India has become progressively poor." These few words sum up one of the most poignant losses of the Indian ryot, and

cloth manufacture of late years. I think the superior skill of our artisans and our improvements in machinery have enabled us to import cloth, and to undersell the native weavers in their own markets."—"East India Papers, 1830," Mr. Chaplin, pp. 175, 179.

⁴¹ "East India Papers," Vol. 3, pp. 181, 182.

"In 1816-17 India not only clothed the whole of that vast population, but exported £1,650,426 worth of goods. Thirty years later the whole of this export disappeared, and India imported four millions sterling of cotton goods."—"India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 126.

the loss of an occupation which had been so far the mainstay in village economy.

To turn again to the question of the management of customs, we find that the under-renters, having taken up their shares of the management from wealthy merchants, to whom the whole pergunna may have been farmed for Rs.50,000 to Rs.1.50,000,⁴² employed all their ingenuity to entice traders to pass within the limits of their contract, and gave lower rates for exporting and importing to merchants who were their acquaintances, and this method, in the course of time, led to a variation in duties even on the same articles in different pergunnas that eventually precluded the possibility of making out any uniform account of export and import duties on the advent of the British. Captain Briggs had actually shown the variations that the rates of customs underwent at different nakas, or chowkies, in one pergunna called "Lulling." The pergunna, though mostly deserted, had within its limits nine chowkies, and the rates varied from one to the other. The articles, either for export or import, came under four denominations: (1) *Bhoasar* (grain in general); (2) *Nunkubbar* (salt, oil, etc.); (3) *Kubbar* (nuts, dried fruits, drugs, dyes, etc.); (4) and *Kisana* (grocery, spices, and metals of all sorts). The duties, as stated, varied in each pergunna and were levied on the bulk and not on the value of the goods.⁴³ The inhabitants of the pergunna were considerably favoured within the precincts of their own district.

In Kandesh the customs fetched Rs 74,040 under Baji Rao, but it had risen to Rs.1,70,811 in 1230 Fusly under the British, and Captain Briggs was confident that under a different system this branch of revenue would show a considerable increase, but always subject to the capability of the country to create a demand for the article of trade and manufacture. Captain Briggs pleaded his inability to supply Government with any definite data regarding the export and import duties on goods passing in and out of Khandesh.⁴⁴

⁴² Letter No. 953 of Oct. 31, 1820.

⁴³ Letter No. 1326 of March 27, 1823.

⁴⁴ "Having premised that no sort of data remains of former years, that the duties not only vary in each of the 19 pergunnas, but at all of the 275 nakas or chowkies in Kandesh, at each of which the customs are levied, that the duties are imposed on the bulk of the articles, and not on their value, it is clear that I am deprived of the means of filling up the form which has been transmitted to me for that purpose. It has been done, however, as far as lay in my power, from the records of the custom contractors of 1229 Fusly. . . The same articles have paid duty over and over again and have been entered in each of the pergunnas as often as they have arrived there; it is evident that it becomes impossible to say whether it is the same or any other, and

The principal difficulty which faced the new Government was the collection of the instalments from the custom farmers.⁴⁵ Mr. Pottinger, in 1822, writing to the Commissioner, reported a balance of Rs.70,000 as standing against the names of several farmers held in custody. In August of the same year he again reported the balances due from Nasik Division of Rs.12,056; Chandore Rs.854; Ahmednagar Rs.23,434; and in Umbur Rs.7,079⁴⁶ in Fusly 1230. In Fusly 1231 the balances stood against Nasik of Rs.49,200; Chandore Rs.2,628; Ahmednagar Rs.22,280; and Kurmallia Rs.13,510. This is a testimony of the difficulties the collection of the Zukaut farms gave the Government.

Though the British continued the Maratha system of farming the customs, it appears that exemptions from duties were granted to certain articles in the years following. Grain, firewood, kurbee, and vegetables were some of the articles included in the exemption list of 1822 when the farmers were given the contracts.⁴⁷ The exemption of these necessities of life affected the revenue coming from the customs, and especially the exemption of grain brought a decrease of Rs.38,150 in Khandesh,⁴⁸ to quote but one instance.

The abolition of Transit Duties was a matter of grave necessity on which the Commissioner and Collectors were all agreed. Under the existing system the ryots suffered the greatest hardships not only because the transit duty was in itself high, but on account of the oppression and extortions that were practised by the Zukaut farmers who, it appears, always had the Kumavisdar and Zemindars on their side, so that whenever a complaint was made by a poor ryot, redress was seldom obtained.⁴⁹ In the Ahmednagar Collectorate, in Nasik, and the neighbouring districts, innumerable complaints were made against

this repetition has raised the number of salt bullocks computed at 1,30,000, no less than 10,26,994 loads. The same may be said of more or less every article in proportion to the number of nakas which it has passed... As it is impossible to say where each article has travelled, so it is impossible to know what is the amount of duty payable by each. All the information, therefore, at can be obtained is the total amount levied on each article."—Letter No. 953 Oct. 31, 1820.

⁴⁵ Letter No. 1329 of Jan. 28, 1822.

⁴⁶ Letter No. 1475 of Aug. 31, 1822.

⁴⁷ Letter No. 1499 of Sept. 21, 1822.

⁴⁸ Letter No. 1257 of Oct. 21, 1822.

Talukas	1st Sale	2nd Sale	Decrease
Dhoolia	12,050	7,150	4,900
Malligaum	13,050	9,550	3,500
Baglan	1,650	1,200	450
Nundoorbar	15,000	9,850	5,750

⁴⁹ Letter No. 1417 of June 7, 1822.

Zukautdars for levying more than the established rates of customs; and when called to account for so doing, they could only show tables and statements which the Collector said were, without doubt, considerably above the old established rates. Nasik, Kopergaon, and Sinnur had been exempt from export duties under the late Government, but it was levied at those places, and the Zamindars had the effrontery to give forged statements purporting to be the old established rates of collection at those places.

The worst effect of the transit duties was on grain in times of scarcity, which made the condition of the ryots in years of famine very deplorable. The excessive high rate of duty made it a matter of little consequence to the ryot whether he purchased grain in times of depression in his own pergunna at a large price, or got it at a reduced rate in a neighbouring district.

The exemption of grain from taxation would help the ryot to acquire a degree of affluence that he had never attained so long as he had been obliged to pay a heavy tax on the produce of his field. He would no longer find it necessary to dispose of his grain to the village bania at a reduced rate to pay his instalment (*kist*), but he would be enabled to carry it to a good market and obtain a just and fair price for his labour. The removal of this transit duty on grain would cost the Government Rs.70,000, stated Mr. Crawford, but the comfort and happiness "it will tend to diffuse in the family of every ryot, will amply recompense Government."

Elphinstone, in his evidence before the Committee, when asked if the transit duties interfered with the internal trade of the country, said that it did in some parts of the country. In the Deccan he said that such duties were levied almost at every stage, and that impeded the communications very badly. The duties were, according to him, sometimes farmed and sometimes collected, but he was of the opinion that farming was a preferable mode, because there was competition among the farmers to give little vexation to levy duties so as to draw people on to their roads. This belief of the Commissioner appears to be faulty in light of the evidence borne by the Collectors of the various districts. Asked if the transit duty affected the prices, the Commissioner said that some increase of price must be occasioned by the loss of time caused by the detention of goods on the way. The transit duties were collected both through the passage of goods in British territories as well as on their entrance into those of the Indian Princes⁵⁰ Chaplin was for its

⁵⁰ "East India Papers, 1830," pp. 152, 168.

complete abolition, as it would afford relief to the cultivator in that extraordinary state of depression into which all agricultural produce had sunk.⁵¹

In August, 1822, Mr. Chaplin temporarily allowed the suspension of transit duty on grain in Khandesh "as a relief to the cultivator under the present low prices."⁵² In the same year, in September, the Governor came to a decision to continue the duties, but in the coming fusly had sanctioned their removal on cattle, cotton and cotton thread, vegetables and fruits, timber and firewood, and grain. These articles were to be excluded from the contracts of the custom farmers. The Collectors were requested to immediately strike off all duties on grain,—the produce of the Company's territories,—allowing such remissions to custom farmers as might have been stipulated at the time of the bidding, in anticipation of the probable abolition of this tax. Utmost publicity was to be given to this measure.⁵³ This generous step did much to help the ryot to tide over difficult times. The Collectors were also to exert their influence to persuade the Jagidars to adopt a similar measure, namely the abolition of all duties on the transit of grain.

It would be well to consider how these transit duties affected trade under the late Government. The duties on trade were divided into import, export, and transit, or in Maratha terms—*Thul Mahr*, *Thul Bhureet*, and *Ooba Marg*. "These terms do not apply to the boundary of any territory or province," wrote Grant Duff,⁵⁴ "but to the limits of every kusba or market town throughout the dominions of the late Peshwa." Each kusba had some usage differing from the others, but in all there were certain specified rates for the people of the kusba, inhabitants of adjoining villages, and persons coming from other districts (these last were termed *Bechayetee*). There were persons called *Chalee Ka Kool* who paid per bullock load, or a certain sum for exemption from transit duties. The transit duties were of four different classes: (1) *Bhur Mahal* (payment at one place); (2) *Khur Mahal* (payment for transit through some parts of the perganna); (3) transit duties payable by persons residing in the villages near the kusba; and (4) every dealer had to pay the rate of the kusba he might pass through or buy and sell in. The merchandise was classed into *kirana* (grocery), *bhossa* (grains), and *pushneena* (shawls, jewels, etc.). The internal

⁵¹ Report of 1822, p. 56.

⁵² Letter No. 5507 of Aug. 12, 1822.

⁵³ Letter No. 5614 of Sept. 10, 1822.

⁵⁴ Letter No. 331 of Jan. 23, 1820

trade of a kusba was mostly in cloth. The export and import average rate payable on cloth was $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ on wholesale, and 2% on retail. Kumblies paid 9%, Oil 2%, and Ghee $\frac{1}{4}\%$. The duty on grain was $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ to the inhabitants of the kusba, $2\frac{3}{4}\%$ to the inhabitants of adjoining villages, and $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ to persons from other districts. Importers, who export for the kusba in exchange, had an exemption of one half of the import duties. To take, for example, a kusba in Sattara. Its exports consisted of *jawari*, *bajri*, tobacco, red pepper, and onions. The duty on export was 3%; including the transit duty and the *thul mohr*, it came to a total of 5%. Cotton cloth paid a duty of $2\frac{1}{4}\%$. The principal kusba of Sattara was Punderpur. The imports to this mart were Bengal silk, muslin, jewellery, shawls, pugrees, duppttas, etc., from Burhanpur and Nagpur. These articles were exported by merchants to the markets of Bombay, Poona, Southern Koncan, and the Carnatic. The wealthy merchants of good standing employed agents called "Hoondakurries" to make the arrangements for the transport of their goods. Those who were not wealthy enough to employ this class of agents, had their servants and cattle to help them. The "Hoondakurries" arranged with the custom farmers for transportation. They had agents in all parts of the country, and often used fraud to pass their goods free of duty.

Cloth, valued at Rs. 350, in transit from the Carnatic to the market at Sattara, had to pass about 25 different custom "nakas," which would bring the import duty to about $9\frac{1}{4}\%$ before it was exposed for sale in the bazar. The imports from Bombay and Poona were European and Chinese articles. The duties were levied quite indiscriminately on the bullock load at the rate of Rs.700. From Sholapur a bullock load of cloth and grain was estimated at Rs.350. The custom on reaching Punderpur, would be $1\frac{1}{4}\%$. The *kirana* (grocery) came at a duty of about 8%. The principal trade with the Southern Koncan was in rice and all sorts of groceries. Grains paid a duty of 10% and groceries about 5%. Mr. Grant suggested a fixed duty of 5% as a fair aggregate rate beyond the range of the Kusba, and said it would be more equitable than the mode existing that taxed so heavily even the necessities of life. On the internal trade, his suggestion was 2% on an average. That such consolidation of customs would benefit society in the long run, was his opinion. He suggested, besides, that fairs ought to be held at which woollen and metal goods might be sold. No duties need be paid on European articles. By these means, within a few years, much popularity would be given to metal goods, chintz, broadcloth, and various other articles of European produce.

In 1823⁵⁵ we find that the Jagirdars were to be informed of the Company's desire to stop all collection of duties on grain in transport from their territory into the Company's, and vice versa. If the Jagirdars refused, then they must make sure of their collection of duties, since the Company was to do away with all such establishments at the frontiers. The lesser Jagirdars were to bend to the wishes of the paramount power, and, failing this request, their territories might be sequestered.

Even in 1824 the management of customs by the farmers was carried on in a very slovenly manner.⁵⁶ It was impossible to furnish the Government with any detailed statement or actual account regarding the value of grain, or indeed of any other export or import. All that the farmers were interested in was the collection of their dues in the many hundreds of nakas or custom chowkies. At every station there was a peon who could neither read nor write, and whose sole duty was to take the dues and allow the goods to pass, or sometimes accompany the convoy, to the carkoon.

In Ahmednagar, since the abolition of duty on grain, the custom revenue in 1824 had fallen off by Rs.2,24,500, not to speak of the timber, thread, and other articles likewise exempted from the payment of duties.

As regards the effect of the abolition of this transit duty, Mr. Pottinger said that the measure had been passed at a period when the provinces were overstocked and the prices had fallen to a degree unprecedented in the Deccan. He feared that the measure did not have all the effect which had been anticipated, for such had been the perfect stagnation of trade in grain that bidders in it could turn to no quarter that could promise even a small profit, and the ryots were forced to sell at any price. Anyway, according to him, the abolition had left the markets open in the whole range of the Deccan to competition without any charge or trouble. Had this not taken place, he was of the opinion that the agricultural distress would have been still more severe in places where there had been a superabundance of produce.

In 1825⁵⁷ a Custom Committee appears to have been nominated. The request by the committee for information regarding the internal trade of the Collectorates met with refusal on the ground that none of

⁵⁵ Letter No. 1599 of Feb. 11, 1823.

⁵⁶ Letter No. 2147 of Dec. 9, 1824.

⁵⁷ Letter No. 1740 of May 24, 1825.

E. H. F.—3

the custom farmers, since the abolition of the duty in 1822, or even prior to that, had kept any accounts.

Mr. Bruce, the chairman of the committee, assumed that Government, by the repeal of the duty on grain, had incurred a considerable fiscal sacrifice, without conferring any corresponding benefit on the ryot, and suggested that the Collectors should be asked whether the repeal, by encouraging the imports of foreign grain, had not a tendency, besides a loss of the customs, to incur a further loss by the importers underselling our own ryots.

Mr. Robertson refuted this argument on three grounds, though acknowledging, at the same time, that the immediate loss by the repeal could not be made good for several years. He said that (1) the cultivators could now grow every kind of produce as cheaply as those of any other State; (2) this being the case, it was impossible that grain brought from a foreign country could be sold as cheaply in the Company's territories as grain grown at home; (3) there was no country adjoining any of the British territory without duties, hence, near the frontier, no foreign grain could be imported without paying some duties, thereby having its cost increased independently of the expense of carriage. These arguments would certainly hold no ground in a year of scarcity in the Company's territory when a neighbouring foreign dominion had, the same year, an abundant harvest, said Mr. Robertson. He further asserted that it was false to believe that all revenue in India was derived directly from agriculture, for if there were only cultivators in India, they would grow sufficient for their needs only, in which case they would hardly pay any revenue at all. "But," said the Collector, "it is those who consume the supply of grain raised surplus . . . who pay the revenue, and the interest of these should be prominently kept in view." The Collector was in agreement with Mr. Bruce that the revival of the duty would affect the consumers, and "since the promotion of consumption is a point of the highest importance . . . it would indeed be . . . highly dangerous to disregard the objection of taxation being a check to consumption, . . . since, in proportion as we might do so, we would strike at the root of the chief source of income of the State." The present consumers were people who lived from hand to mouth, and "it is our duty," said Mr. Robertson, "to improve their circumstances and thereby promote an increase of this valuable class of men." He was, besides, of the opinion that the artisan had so far been neglected in favour of the agriculturist, in the belief that all revenue was derived from the latter. The growth of raw material for England would pro-

duce a class in society which "would stand in the place of the artisan as consumers of grain," and anything that led to an increase of consumption "would be more prolific, more palatable, and more permanent," wrote the Collector.⁵⁸

Not till 1837 did the evil of these internal duties dawn upon the Government, when final steps were taken to completely abolish it, no matter what sacrifices in revenue might be involved.

Turning to Mr. Chaplin's report, we learn that various business people paid taxes to the late Government according to their status and income. This tax was known as the "Mohturfa," and continued to be collected under the British; it fell more heavily upon the indigent than upon the wealthy.⁵⁹ while the power it invested in the hands of the collectors gave a wide field for perpetual oppression and inquisitorial visits.⁶⁰ The first class of taxpayers was the bankers and sawkars, who, with their influence with the native officials, must have defrauded the new Government. Next came the surrafs, as influential a class in the business world as the sawkars. The remaining taxpayers were the milch cows of this item of revenue; they were traders in cloth, grocery, oil, and ghee, dealers in grains, jewellers, boras, petty shop-keepers, such as tobacco and beetle sellers, perfumers, confectioners, and others. In the district the professional taxes were lower than those in the city.⁶¹

It appears that the city of Nagar had been exempt from the payment of the Mohturfa, for the citizens appealed to Mr. Pottinger that the dealers and artisans of that city had always been exempt from the payment of Mohturfa in virtue of an original promise.⁶² The promise, though only brought down by tradition, had been respected by all Governments under which the city had fallen from time to time, and they requested that the present Government should do likewise.

⁵⁸ Letter No. 2385 of June 27, 1825, from Mr. H. D. Robertson to Mr. Chaplin gives some information on duty on grain. The actual realisation in 1831 Fushly was about Rs70,000. Approximate estimate in 1832 Fushly was again Rs70,000, in 1833 Rs84,000, and in 1834 Rs87,000. The Collector further stated that he was not of the same opinion as Mr. Bruce in regard to the revival of dutiee on the transit of grain, but he lacked sufficient information to communicate his personal notions on the subject. See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826."

⁵⁹ "India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 165.

⁶⁰ "Nobody can claim that Mohturfa taxes satisfied all the modern canons of taxation, or that their abolition during a period of disturbed and depressed trade was justifiable,"—"Indian Journal of Economy, 1933-34," p. 346.

⁶¹ Report of 1822, Mr. Chaplin.

⁶² Letter No. 1697 of May 5, 1823.

In return for this loss of revenue, the citizens had expressed a willingness to pay a yearly sum under the name of "Null" and "Jaonkos" or puttee, for the repair of aqueducts and the city wall. Mr. Pottinger stated that the number of persons who had to pay this puttee had increased, and a new register would have to be prepared. He wrote, further, that it did not matter in the least as to the appellation under which the assessment might be collected. As the people did not wish to use the term "Mohturfa," which they connected with exemption, the Government would do well to collect the same sum under the term of "Puttee." Quite a clever suggestion!

The method by which it was to be levied was to fix the amount to be paid by each class according to its numbers, circumstances, and dealings. The heads of the classes would be informed of the sum which was to be realised through them, and would be requested to draw up a just statement showing the proportion which each individual was to pay. To procure a just statement showing what each individual had to pay was a matter of no small difficulty, of which the Collector was aware. For, he said, that at first it was not likely that he should be able to detect any undue exaction from, or particularly toward, individuals, but he hoped that if any such attempt were made the persons so injured would come forward and present their hardship to him; besides, it could not be forgotten that it was clearly in the interest of the whole body that fairness should be rigidly adhered to in apportioning out the puttee, and he had no doubt that any deviation from that principle would be protested against by many of the members of the class.⁶³ The total sum to be collected as puttee from citizens of all professions came to Rs.3,012-2-0.

"Abkari, which is so important with us," wrote Elphinstone, "did not yield above Rs.10,000. The use of spirituous liquors was forbidden at Poona and discouraged everywhere else. The effects of this system on the sobriety of the people are very conspicuous." In the course of a few years, the evils of drink soon spread, bringing desolation, ruin, and misery to many a labourer's home. But be it said in justice to the memory of our first administrators, that courageous efforts were made to stop the evils of intemperance.

In January 1819,⁶⁴ Mr. Robertson wrote to Mr. Elphinstone that he had stopped the sale of liquor in many parts of his Collectorate,

⁶³ "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826," see the statement of persons residing within the city of Ahmednagar who were to pay Mohturfa or Puttee.

⁶⁴ Letter No. 225 of Jan. 25, 1819.

"with a view to the improvement of the morals of the people." In spite of precautions, large quantities of liquor were smuggled into the houses of private individuals, with the result of a greater spread of drink and crime. With regard to a rise in prices of liquor, and also in the grant of licences, Mr. Robertson wrote that "it will perhaps be found in this, as in other cases where very high duties are imposed as a check, that no vigilance will prevent smuggling." But in spite of these difficulties, he said, "I have the fullest conviction of the general good of suppressing vice, and that more wealth is derivable to a State from the industry and good behaviour of its subjects than by all the taxes invented by which the least encouragement is given to vicious indulgence." Such was the pious wish of Poona's first Collector.

Mr. Pottinger of Ahmednagar⁶⁵ wrote that he had been "studiously careful to prevent any more shops" dealing in liquor "being established." Those that were newly opened in the Gungttery he had abolished the moment he assumed charge of the district. There were no perguntas under him which had more than one shop, and in some there were none.

Mr. Briggs,⁶⁶ reporting on the sale of liquor in Khandesh in the last four years, showed the following sums realized by contracts in:

1228	..	..	Rs.10,748
1229	..	..	" 19,825
1230	..	..	" 38,890
1231	..	..	" 42,135

This rise in the value of contracts was not due to the spread of drink, wrote Mr. Briggs, for there were no crimes committed in intoxication, but the rise was due, according to him, because of the vigilance of the contractors in not allowing any shops to be opened in small towns, and hence the Bheels and Bunjaries were compelled to go to the contractor's shops, which augmented their income, thus enabling them to pay high prices at the yearly renewal of contracts with Government. In the days of Nana Furnavis and Ihlya Bai. arrack was forbidden; under Baji Rao it was connived at; under the British it became a fashion. The sahib drank; his menials were aware of it. There was no shame any more in being drunk. If the rulers indulged in the vice, why should not the ruled?⁶⁷ In the days of Baji Rao the village patels were in league

⁶⁵ Letter No. 890 of July 10, 1820.

⁶⁶ Letter No. 1057 of Aug. 29, 1821.

⁶⁷ Writing on liquor shops, Mr. Tucker, Director of the East India Company, wrote: "They were heretofore shunned by all who have the slightest pretension to character; but now that they are sanctioned and patronised by

with the bheels and together enjoyed the earnings of many a still in the remote corners of the district. With British supervision, these stills were closed, and this was an added advantage to the town contractors; hence a rise in their income induced them to pay more for their licence. To Mr. Briggs, Khandesh was a district where complete prohibition was not possible. All that could be done was to bind the contractors to sell at high prices, which it was hoped would act as a prohibition to the lower orders.

In May, 1823,⁶⁸ Mr. Chaplin, in a circular, informed the Collectors that in spite of their vigilance, the habit of drink had spread considerably among the people. The Honourable Governor-in-Council had in view a check in the sale of liquor as far as practicable, and had, in consequence, entrusted the Commissioner to take steps in that direction.

Mr. Chaplin was of the opinion that complete prohibition was impossible on the ground that the use of spirits was a necessity to the people of the hills and jungles. Most of the Maratha soldiers drank publicly. It formed, at times, an offering to the idols, and was often requisite in medicinal preparations for both men and cattle. The best mode, thought the Commissioner, for controlling its use and sale was to (1) prohibit its sale where it was customary; (2) to prohibit it by raising its price; (3) to sell licences at a high value, and (4) to punish the drunkards. A high price would act undoubtedly as a prohibition, especially to the lower orders, wrote Mr. Chaplin.

Besides these precautions, the following clauses were to be added to the agreement with the arrack renters: (1) They must not sell within five miles of any cantonment, or to any soldier; (2) no person was to be given spirits without a pass signed by the Amildar; (3) they must only receive cash in payment for liquor; (4) they were not to allow any drunkenness or quarrelling in their shops or harbour thieves; (5) no shop must be kept open beyond eight o'clock at night; (6) shops and stills must be limited to a certain number and to a particular situation, under the eye of Government officers; and (7) no deterioration in the quality of the arrack was to be allowed, and the price was to be fixed per pukka seer. The attention of the public servants should be directed toward the discovery of unlicensed stills, and adequate reward must be held out for the purpose. If there were any grounds for suspicion, a search warrant might be issued, but care was always to be taken that

Government, the same degree of opprobrium does not attach to those who frequent them."—"Memorials of Indian Government," p. 489.

⁶⁸ Letter No. 6693 of May 27, 1823.

the officers did not abuse the authority by entering the homes of respectable people, or trespassing in the apartments of the female members of a house. Besides these suggestions, the Collectors⁶⁹ were themselves to take every step to aid Government in this noble task, wrote the Commissioner.

Mr. Robertson, on the receipt of the above orders, wrote to the Commissioner that the materials for the manufacture of liquor were very few in kind and small in quantity. He was of the opinion, besides, that not one in ten in the Deccan relished drink for its own sake. Yet they were not to think that if temptation were purposely thrown in the way of the masses, they would still refrain from it on their own initiative. High taxation would perhaps be the best course to counteract any growing taste that might be then observable in the people. The worthy Collector wrote, "It is the duty of a wise and benevolent legislature to eradicate this fascinating source of evil to the utmost extent. The vice or luxury of drinking spreads . . . wherever it takes the slightest root, and has frequently baffled the most determined efforts to arrest its progress, while its baneful effects extend even to future generations. Gellius maintained that if a drunkard should succeed in begetting a child, it would never have a good brain. 'Ebrii gignant ebrios,' says Plutarch, and even Aristotle, who knew much of such matters, confesses that drunken women bring forth children like themselves. Dr. Darwin remarked that in a few generations the families of a drunkard become extinct."⁷⁰ The learned Collector was of the firm opinion that wherever there was the means of manufacturing this evil, the people would always fall a victim to it.⁷¹ Even a few merry drunkards, in an ignorant society like that in the Deccan, could never be tolerated, was his opinion! Therefore, heavy taxation and strict restrictions were perhaps the best means of control. In the days of the late Government, the Marathas, in spite of the fatigue of a soldier, seldom, if ever, took to drink. The few new shops found at Khandalla, Wulwan, Wurgau, Poonowla, Kowta, and Shievaqur were opened in 1804 in the time of the late Peshwa, for

⁶⁹ Letter No. 1759 of July 10, 1823, from Mr. Pottinger to the Commissioner, tells him of the steps taken to lessen the sale of liquor in his district. In a letter from Mr. Pottinger to Mr. Crawford he said he had framed a set of rules to restrict the sale of liquor, and Mr. Crawford was to report the progress of these regulations to the Governor-in-Council. If any new shop were opened in Sindhi's villages or those of the Jagirdars', they must be closed. If Sindhi's officers refused, Mr. Pottinger put forth their claim in the following words: "I conceive we have indisputable grounds for insisting on Sindhi's observance of any arrangement having the general good so exclusively in view."

⁷⁰ Letter No. 1779 of Aug. 2, 1823.

⁷¹ See his example of drunkenness in New York in the above quoted letter.

wearied travellers across the Ghauts. Besides these, there were stills at Junnar, Watur, Jeguri, and Indapur licensed by the late Government, "but there were none in any other place." In spite of these temptations, the Collector said, "I am not aware there is among the people any increasing propensity to drinking or any wish for more liquor." With the character of the people as such, Mr. Robertson thought that no new regulation was essential to control the vice.

We have brought ample testimony to light to reveal the good wishes of our first administrators, who, fully conscious of the evils of the hideous vice, were prepared to do all within their power to save the people from the shameful degradation of drink. Yet the temptation of an increasing revenue could alone have prompted the successors of Pottinger, Briggs, and Robertson to neglect, nay, to encourage, this item of revenue at the cost of the moral, physical, and mental degradation of their subjects. Well might Mr. Tucker write in 1851:

"It is scarcely concealed that our object is to increase our resources by enlarging the sphere of taxation... and a more impure source of revenue could not be well devised.... The Abkarry shops are the resort of the idle and the dissolute—of vagrants and thieves,... and the project which has been countenanced by the Court, must have the effect of increasing the number of those odious haunts of vice."⁷²

Khandesh was the home of opium, and the talukas of Yawul and Sowda produced opium worth Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000 annually.⁷³ Baglan also grew the drug, but it was of an inferior quality as compared with that of Yawul and Sowda. The opium of Sowda bore an increased value of 50% as compared with that of Baglan.⁷⁴ During the Fusly 1229, the opium from Sowda and Yawul fetched from nine to eleven rupees per seer of eighty rupees weight, and the latter averaged from six to seven and a half from the same quantity. The actual bighas under cultivation for opium were 1169 in Khandesh.⁷⁵

Mr. Briggs wrote that a bigha would produce an annual average of 6 seers. This would give upon the whole 175 maunds 15 seers. Each maund weighed 80 lbs., and of this, one-fourth only was consumed in Khandesh. The Sowda and Yawul opium was greatly esteemed at Hyderabad, into which place it was often smuggled, said the Collector,

⁷² "Memorials of Indian Government," Henry St. George Tucker, p. 489.

⁷³ Letter No. 893 of July 23, 1820

⁷⁴ Letter No. 922 of Sept. 4, 1820.

⁷⁵ See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826," for the prices and pergunnas under cultivation.

in spite of all precautions. The only way to forestall this was either to purchase all that was produced, or to prohibit its cultivation. The Baglan opium, in a similar manner, found its way into the Dang hills, inhabited by independent Coley chiefs, and since they were near the port of Damaun, the drug would pass very easily into the hands of the Portuguese if they showed the least enterprise, said Briggs. Under such circumstances, wrote the Collector, after a sufficiently good examination of the Yawul and Sowda opium, if found quite good enough to recommend its purchase to Government, the growth of the Baglan poppy ought to be prohibited altogether.

Mr. Briggs' suggestion⁷⁶ for preventing the smuggling of the drug was to issue licences confined to one vendor within every circuit of twenty miles, and that those persons were to enter into security bonds not to sell to the smaller banyas a greater quantity than one seer at a time, and that the cultivators be forbidden to sell it wholesale to any person other than those licensed by Government. When the Government sanctioned the issue of licences, Mr. Briggs wrote back that the smaller vendors, in a country like Khandesh, where opium was not only raised but was in general use, would not take the licence, but continued their trade clandestinely. He was, therefore, of the opinion that the better course would be to put up the licences of each pergunna to sale by contract. This plan, he wrote, would work out more successfully and bring within a year or two a considerable amount of revenue.⁷⁷ In October of 1820, steps were taken to subject opium in Khandesh to the same rules as were applicable to foreign countries, by which the growth of opium, which would not be brought to the Company's rates, was to be discouraged; no opium was to be allowed to pass through Khandesh and no individual was to sell or buy more than 5 tolas at a time.⁷⁸ The Government had further forbidden any opium to be bought for the present on its behalf. In 1820, prior to this notification, Mr. Briggs had bought for Government opium of Sowda and Yawul worth Rs 20,000. The cultivators of Lonier, Sowda, and Yawul asked what they were to do with the opium they had in hand, and whether they were forbidden to cultivate it altogether.⁷⁹ Prior to the Government letter counteringmanding

⁷⁶ Letter No. 939 of Sept. 28, 1820. Mr. Briggs wrote that he could, for the present, procure 10,000 Surat seers from the districts. Baglan would, according to him, produce 20,000 Surat seers annually.

⁷⁷ Letter No. 945 of Oct. 14, 1820

⁷⁸ Letter No. 950 of Oct. 24, 1820

⁷⁹ Letter No. 957 of Nov. 8, 1820

all purchase of opium on Government account, the Mamlutdar of Yawul had, like Mr. Briggs, purchased 104½ Surat seers and sent them on to Dhulia.

By 1822 the Government had monopolised the trade in opium, and appointed an agent whose duty was to supply the Collectortates of the Deccan with that quantity of opium required for internal consumption.⁸⁰ In the same year we come across a letter⁸¹ from Mr. Pottinger to the Commissioner, criticising a draft of regulations regarding the importation and retail sale of opium. He suggested that there ought to be only two warehouses, one at Ahmednagar and another at Nasik. In addition to the custom-house officers (not appointed so far), he proposed that the authority, to ascertain that the quantity of opium corresponded with that stated in the pass, should also be vested in the Kumavisdars, and any person the Collector might think fit to entrust with that authority. Any person found with an excess should be reported to the Collector, with his explanation, and the opium deposited in a safe place. The right to sell two Surat maunds was, according to Mr. Pottinger, too much for the Deccan, and he proposed one maund or 14 pukka seers as being better suited. He suggested that the licences be sold by public auction, the Collector having determined beforehand as to the number of towns and villages in which the drug could be sold, and the number of shops in each of them. The term granted to the licensee should be extended to two or three years. No provision had been made in the regulation for the disposal of opium made in the territory under Bombay, and this was essentially requisite. All persons who made opium within the territories subject to Bombay were to bring the produce of their fields to the Kumavisdars, in whose presence it would be weighed and registered, the quantity being placed in deposit till purchased by a licensed retailer. This, perhaps, was the only means, suggested Mr. Pottinger, by which they could check the sale of a home-made drug which would undersell the licensed retailer.

At the Commissioner's inquiry of the Collectors as to what would be the requirements of their Collectortates as regards internal consumption of opium annually, Mr. Pottinger wrote⁸² that he could not be sure as to the exact quantity, but recommended 30 Surat maunds to be sent to Ahmednagar, accompanied by invoices of its price, etc., and instructions as to the payment of duties, or fees, it was to be sold for.

⁸⁰ Letter No. 5643 of Sept. 19, 1822.

⁸¹ Letter No. 1497 of Sept. 20, 1822. No Draft Regulation was found among the records.

⁸² Letter No. 1501 of Sept. 21, 1822.

This reveals that so far the Government had not laid down a definite scale for the disposal of the drug.

In 1823⁸³ the demand for opium throughout the districts ceased. Owing to restrictions imposed on the facilities for getting it, the article which was of an inferior quality, had to be procured from the pergunnas themselves, and the traffic in the drug had become almost unknown. Of the Government supply the price was so high that no offer was made which could even approach the price at which the drug was estimated in the invoices. The scarcity in the districts had been caused by the heavy duties levied on it; and those who thought that they could get their supply directly from Bombay far cheaper, now found the lowest rate at which Government could sell the drug too high for their means to speculate in.

The trade⁸⁴ in salt imported into Poona before it fell into British hands, was on an average 108,000 bullock loads, containing 100 seers, or to reduce the calculations, to about 129,600 bullock loads of 80 seers each. The greater proportion was brought into Poona from Penn, and a few thousand bullock loads from Panwell, Callian and Shahabad, the salt of which places was inferior to Penn. The distribution of salt in the important markets was:

- Poona from 70 to 75,000 bullock loads.
- Tulligam from 10 to 12,000 bullock loads.
- Nowlacombrey about 5,000 bullock loads.
- Junere from 8 to 10,000 bullock loads.

In the year 1793 no less than 129,000 bullock loads of salt passed through the Collectorate. The ryots near the Ghauts were wont to bring salt in small bags or parcels from the pans, which was allowed duty free; the quantity guessed at might be anything nearing 10,00,000, said Mr. Robertson. The quantity of salt consumed at Poona city and its surrounding districts was reckoned at Rs.11,00,000; the consumption under the British had fallen, due to a reduction in population and the absence of a Court. "The prices since the famine in 1804," wrote the Collector, "have been much less, and 200 lbs. now sell for Rs.2 and Rs.2 $\frac{1}{4}$, or taking the medium of 2 $\frac{1}{8}$, one pound costs 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ reas or 1/3 of a penny." The road duty was 13 annas on 200 lbs. The cheapness of the selling price, said the Collector, was due to cheap carriage of it by the Bunjaries. The road duty from Penn to the remotest parts of

⁸³ Letter No. 1709 of May 18, 1823.

⁸⁴ Letter No. 1220 of June 15, 1821.

the district was 19 annas only. From the most westerly corner it was 10 annas to the Bore Ghaut and 11½ to any other.

To a family of six, a quantity of 8 lbs. might be quite sufficient; that brought about 96 lbs. or about 70,00,000 lbs. among the whole ryot, calculated Mr. Robertson. From this the Collector calculated there were about 73,000 families of six individuals, making a population of 4,38,000 in the district. Speaking of the consumption of salt in the towns, it would be more than the villages, due to more luxuries. Requiring 24 lbs. per annum to a person, the population of Poona, if it consumed the entire quantity which had passed into the city, would be 1,25,000 souls. But, said Mr. Robertson, concluding that at least 500,000 lbs. of salt were still unconsumed of the 3 million imported, the calculation would show the population of Poona to be 1,04,000 souls only. The entire population of the Poona Collectorate was conjectured at about half a million, including the city of Poona.

In Khandesh, due to a lack of any authentic records, the consumption of salt was calculated on mere inquiries.⁸⁵ The ports from which salt was obtained were:

⁸⁶ Oolpee Goree Bunder	90,000	loads of 80 seers
Moongybhatta	9,000	" " "
Punnar	4,500	" " "
Bulsar		
Uttala	90,000	" " "
Damaun		

bringing the total to 1,93,500, of which 60,000 was consumed in Khandesh. The population was estimated at 5,00,000 souls. After allowing, said the Collector, 40 seers annually for every family of five persons, it left a surplus of 10,000 loads. This gave an expenditure of one rupee annually in every ryot's family, the calculation having been made on the supposition that 30 seers of meal required 1 seer of salt to savour it for consumption.

In 1822⁸⁷ the ryots of Kurmallia appealed against a tax of 2 annas per bullock load of salt levied in the Nizam's territory. The tax was called "Punchotra," and weighed heavily on the poor, besides preventing dealers from bringing salt, which was a dire necessity of life. The amount realised in 1229 had been Rs.240-1-0 and in 1230 Fusly

⁸⁵ Letter No. 942 of Oct. 6, 1820.

⁸⁶ See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826," for detailed information.

⁸⁷ Letter No. 1332 of Feb. 5, 1822

Rs.220-2-3. The sum, according to the Collector, was very poor, and he begged sanction to annul the same.

One of the many causes for an economic depression in the early years was the stoppage of the supply of gold and silver, either as chouth or plunder, that poured into the Deccan from Hindustan by the inroads of the Marathas. After the advent of the British, a great scarcity of siccas appears to have been felt in the bazar of Poona, and the merchants appealed to the Commissioner to allow the mint for the "Hallee sicca" to be re-opened, which had closed down due to the late disturbance, and, moreover, because silver importation into the district had also stopped, due to uneasy times.⁸⁸ Mr. Elphinstone, though averse to re-opening the mint, did not, at the commencement of British rule, wish to displease so important a class of inhabitants as the merchants and sawkars, and gave his consent to the re-coining of the "Hallee sicca."⁸⁹

The opening of the British connection with the monetary world of the Marathas was faced with quite a complicated question. There was, under the late Government, so large a number of siccas, with such variation in their value when they were brought for exchange to the markets, that the surraf, sawkars, and merchants defrauded the public at will. The value of a sicca varied with its demand and supply like any other commodity in the market. The sawkars would often give a value far less for a coin of higher intrinsic value, with a greater proportion of gold or silver that might have gone in its making, and amassed the better kinds of coins, either to melt them for the precious metal, or, having taken a certain proportion of their good metal, recoined them again in a mixture of some base alloy and sent them out again into circulation.

The copper coins⁹⁰ were much reduced in value at the British occupation, and measures had to be adopted to prevent their further debasement and also to fix them at one standard. Mr. Pottinger wrote in 1818, "I am so fully aware of the intricacy and delicacy of this subject that I was by no means willing to interfere in it, but the sawkars of large villages belonging to Sindhia, and in the Nizam, in this neighbourhood have been in the habit of carrying away the good and current coin and having it recoined and then brought back at an enormous profit to themselves and loss to the public." In spite of persons being stationed at

⁸⁸ Letter No. 87 of Aug. 12, 1818

⁸⁹ Letter No. 524 of Aug. 23, 1819.

⁹⁰ Letter No. 127 of July 23, 1818.

the gates of the city to seize all pice such as was deficient in weight, the sawkars elluded their grasp, and the original pice had lost nearly half its former weight. The standard of value of the pice in Nagar was to be the same as that then existing in Poona and Sirur. Besides this debasement of the copper coin, we learn that in 1820⁹¹ the "chandore rupee" was forged and sent in great numbers into circulation. Immediate steps were taken to stop its coinage and to trace these forgeries. These were some of the difficulties the new Government had to face in the monetary market. Its aims in the future would be to reach one standard of value, but for the present, with the aid of the sawkars, to draw up a fixed standard of value of exchange for the many sicca which were in circulation, a measure which, if properly carried out, would stop the fluctuation in the prices of the coins and prevent the public, especially the ryot, who now paid his kists (installments) in currency, from being defrauded. The sawkars had so far not only defrauded the public, but now, by giving the ryots the debased coins sometimes in exchange for their produce and at times for better coins whose value the kumbi little understood, cheated the Government also, since the ryot paid his revenue to the treasury in the currency procured from the sawkar.

In 1819, Mr. Pottinger sent a circular⁹² to sawkars and surrafs stating, "Whereas many different sorts of coins are now in circulation in the Deccan, their undefined values with reference to each other and all of them to the Ankosie rupee, led to much confusion and alteration in their being received as revenue from the ryots and being paid from the Sirkar treasury." With a view to obviating further difficulties, especially those of the ryot, the Government had resolved to frame a table for each of the talukas, according to which all coins (gold or silver) would in future be received and paid. He requested that the Surrafs and Sawkars of the Kusba in the Taluka would meet and give "their impartial and unbiased opinion after mature deliberation on the subject of the relative value of coins" in circulation in their Kusba. The Government had no intentions to interfere with the bazar rates of exchange on "Hoondies," remittances, etc., promised the circular. The table to be filled and sent requested to know the value of "Pagodas" (gold), "Bellapooree," "Chumargoondee," and "Soortie" (silver) coins in exchange for 10⁹³ "Ankose rupees."

By 1820 the Commissioner had sanctioned Mr. Pottinger to obtain

⁹¹ Letter No. 707 of March 2, 1820.

⁹² Circular No. 645 of Dec. 8, 1819.

⁹³ See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826."

tables of the relative current value of all kinds of rupees in circulation within the Deccan, with a view to creating a general standard value by which all coins should be received from the cultivators and paid from the treasury to all persons other than military "who are already provided for."⁹⁴

This fluctuation in the value of coins was not only injurious to the ryots, but also to the troops, writes Mr. Pottinger in 1823.⁹⁵ This shows that no conclusive steps toward a standard value for all coins had been reached, though its importance had been felt since 1818. Mr. Pottinger, it appears, had adopted for his Collectorate, for the last two years, a method which had stood the test of time and could not be considered any longer a mere theoretical experiment.

He had assumed, as the basis of his calculation, that all the troops at Sholapur were to be paid in Bombay rupees, or other coins supposed to be made equal to them by a premium being added; and as Government had ordered the "Ankosie rupee" to be considered 4% less than the Bombay one, it only remained to lay down, according to him, a general permanent standard for the receipt of rupees into the treasury, whether from the ryot or sawkar, and to issue them to the troops and everyone else at the same rate. The rupee to be adopted as the groundwork of the standard, was the "Ankose," and the rates at which all other rupees were to be received and disbursed, were calculated with reference to it. This also obviated all confusion in accounts, as no entries were made except in that currency.

Another advantage from the above scheme, said the Collector, was that it was no longer necessary to interfere or fix the bazar rates of exchange, or those in use among the sawkars. The fact was that, by Government laying down an invariable standard for their receipts and issues, a salutary restriction was imposed on the fluctuation in the exchange of currency, because the ryot, on being acquainted with the fixed treasury rates of Government, would only sell and buy agreeable to them, and as they were the greatest source of revenue and circulating medium, their dealings would in some degree guide the whole population.

This scheme had been pursued with the utmost success in Ahmednagar and its surrounding districts where the Government treasury rates were universally known and acknowledged; "so much so," wrote the Collector, "that even when I sell or purchase bills from shroffs they

⁹⁴ Letter No. 709 of March 4, 1820.

⁹⁵ Letter No. 1681 of April 15, 1823.

never object to receive or pay according to them."⁹⁶ The rates at which the various kinds of rupees were to be received from the ryots were:

100 Korah Ankosee Rupees equal to	101.0 0 Solakhee Ankosee
	101.0 0 Nirnul Chandoree
	102 0 0 Solakhee "
	101 2 0 Nirnul Zurruputka
	102 2 0 Solakhee "
	105 0 0 Nirnul Bareek
	Bellapooree
	106 2 0 Solakhee or Mota
	Bellapooree
	101 0 0 Korah Wabgamunsee
	102 0 0 Solakee "
	105 0 0 Korah Chumargoondee
	106 2 0 Chapee

If the ryots brought any other rupee to the treasury, they were to be asked to exchange it for one of the above sorts.

Mr. Pottinger's suggestions were adopted⁹⁷ by his assistant, Mr. Crawford, at Sholapur, after consulting the sawkar and surrafs of the districts. The treasury rates of Ahmednagar suited Sholapur, and the Sub-Collector recommended their adoption with the slight change in the number of coins receivable in the treasury being more than twelve. He submitted a list⁹⁸ of twenty various species which would be acceptable at the treasury. The rupees most in circulation in the bazars were the "Chapee," "Ankosee" and "Bellapooree." Mr. Crawford informed Mr. Pottinger that, with the limitation on the receipt of coins at the Sholapur treasury, arrangements would have to be made with the Principal Collector at Dharwar and his treasury. Mr. Pottinger⁹⁹ consented to recommend to the Commissioner the adoption of the table of rates suggested by Mr. Crawford. He did not think it necessary to request the Sub-Collector south of the Bhima (included in the Dharwar Collectorate) not to send any coins except those in the table, to the Sholapur treasury, for such other coins, suggested Mr. Pottinger, could be disposed of in the bazar of Sholapur, and the debit or credit resulting from such a measure should go under the head of "profit and loss by exchange." In the same letter we learn that the ryots paid their instalments in the Company's rupees at Dharwar, which was 8% higher than the "Ankosee," in which the ryots of Sholapur payed their dues.

⁹⁶ "The plan I propose I have found attended with the best effect. It has been highly praised by every class, the only mode of preventing everlasting disputes and contentions, and it has been placidly adopted by the trading body of this large place, and throughout the districts as equally just toward all."—Letter No. 1681 of April 15, 1823.

⁹⁷ Letter of April 22, 1823.

⁹⁸ See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826," for all the three tables.

⁹⁹ Letter of April 28, 1823.

On the 7th May, 1823,¹⁰⁰ Mr. Farish, Secretary to the Government, on behalf of the Governor sanctioned the measures adopted by Captain Pottinger "for the purpose of checking fraudulent combinations to keep up the nominal valuation of the metallic currency." Mr. J. Wedderburn, the Accountant General, whilst approving of Captain Pottinger's initiative, hoped the Collector had been "studious in fixing the rates.. in payment of the revenues not to overvalue them, as compared with the Ankosee rupees."

Besides the forgeries in coin, their innumerable species, the difficulties of exchange, and a distinct lack of precious metals, the mints were farmed out under the late Government. There was only one mint at Poona in the days of the Peshwa which paid a rent of Rs.1,400 per month. The coins minted were the "Ankosee" and "Hallee sicca." It appears that as early as 1819 a plan was contemplated to place the mints in the Deccan under a special Mint Committee at the Presidency.¹⁰¹

The Chandore and Nasik Mints were not farmed, but the business of coinage was entrusted to natives who paid a percentage to Government on the number of rupees coined.¹⁰² The only control exercised by the mint-master was when the operation of coining took place. One of the carkoons of the Kumavisdar's establishment, with a pon, had to be present to take an account of the number of coins which were struck, and when the day's work was over, to lock-up the dies and hand over the keys to the Kumavisdar. The Mint-master at Nasik had a sunad of appointment from the late Government which granted him a salary from the proceeds of the percentage.

In the days of the late Government, the mint had been under the control of a special person, and a Carkoon and sepoys, on behalf of the Government, attended when coining had to be done. When a person brought bullion, they obtained an order for its coinage from the Kumavisdar. The Carkoon and Sepoys then accompanied him to the mint, and there the silver and alloy were melted down in the proportion of 11 massas of silver to 6 ruttees of alloy, to make a rupee. The die was then sent for from the Kutcherry of the Kumavisdar, and the coin struck in the presence of the owner of the bullion. The mint-master, the carkoon, and sepoys received a percentage on the sum coined daily.

The mint at Chandore and Nasik were never farmed. The Government dues on coinage were a tax on Rs.1,000 of 5 Rs. 2 As., the

¹⁰⁰ Letter No. 1717 of May 22, 1823; Letter of May 15, 1823; Letter of May 1823; Letter of May 7, 1823.

¹⁰¹ Letter No. 555 of Dec. 28, 1819

¹⁰² Letter No. 692 of Jan. 20, 1820.

E. H. F—4

superintendence costing on the same sum 1 Re. 1 An., the total cost for Rs.1,000 came to 6 Rs. 3 As. Out of this percentage of 1 Re. 1 An., the carkoon was paid a salary of Rs.25 per month. The total balance arising from both heads, was remitted to the Treasury, and the mint-master and Zemindar received a small undefined sum from persons bringing the bullion. The mint-master was bound to receive all badly coined rupees from the Sawkars.

The mint at Nasik coined the "Zhuree Putkee" rupee, which weighed one goong less than 11 mass-as of gold and contained, besides, 6 goonges of alloy in Baji Rao's time, but under Mr. Briggs, with a view to increasing the number of coins, the quantity of alloy was raised to 7 goonges. Government received Rs.5½ on every 100 that were coined, and had a Carkoon and sepoy to superintend with the Coolkurnee of the town of Nasik, who was bound to be present. The Coolkurnee received* a quarter of a rupee on each Rs.1,000 that were coined. The Nasik mint had never been farmed. Fifty rupees were coined free as bonus in every 1,000.

In 1822, a mint regulation appears to have been passed, bringing the mints under the control of the one in Bombay (²) and requested the Collectors to pay frequent visits to the mints, and some times to send down to Bombay a certain number of rupees to be assayed¹⁰³

The first twenty years of British administration were years of trial, especially in the land administration with which we shall deal in more detail later. The years 1821 and 1832 were calamitous to the ryot and the revenue. The death in live stock in years of such scarcity of water and fodder, broke the endurance of the ryot for some years to come. A *Kumal* assessment of the best days of the Maratha government as a standard to be reached, no matter how cautiously,¹⁰⁴ was a principle that was responsible for much mischief. The Collectors, in spite of the strict vigilance of the Commissioner, hurried to reach the maximum revenue as soon as a year of good harvest appeared, a blunder that was responsible for keeping the ryot's energy at the lowest ebb, and denying him that respite to recoup his lost strength in years of scarcity, which held a good proportion of the span of the first twenty years. The prices had fallen to a level unprecedented in the Deccan, due to the extensive cultivation followed by abundant output, collateral with the burden on land which now became the sole means of subsistence to the

¹⁰³ Letter No. 5264 of June 7, 1822

¹⁰⁴ The letters in the record book (1818-1826) from the Commissioner to the Collectors bear ample evidence to this statement

thousands thrown out of employment. The native Court disappeared and the foreigners' needs were satisfied by markets other than those of India. Their high salaries went to feed the products of their own country and impoverished our industries by lack of encouragement, and often wanton neglect. The new trading principles, built upon the theory of exploitation of the so-called backward countries of the world, had begun, and the Deccan came into its share of producing raw materials to enrich foreign mills and markets at a ruinous cost to our ryots.

With agriculture that was overburdened (not to speak of the years of famine), with prices whose fall was unprecedented, with an assessment that aimed too high, with a death-blow to the few home industries by the import of foreign commodities, with a lack of precious metals and a vicious system of exchange, the years that followed brought great economic depression.

CHAPTER II

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

(1818-1868)

THE Indian village, since time immemorial, has been the keystone of our administrative structure. These villages have endured through a number of centuries, and the first thing that struck Mr. Elphinstone, on examining the indigenous Government of Maharashtra, was our villages or townships,¹ which had, in miniature, all the material of a state, so self-sufficient with republican tendency as to be entirely independent if the central control were withdrawn, or even the outside world closed to communication.²

It is claimed by the conquerors that, long before their advent, these village communities were fast decaying and their vigour and independence were fading into a thing of the past.³ But Mr. Elphinstone's testimony bears evidence that though their government might not be compatible with a very good form of administration, it was an excellent remedy for the imperfections of a bad one; it had prevented the bad effect of its negligence and weakness, not to speak of the barrier it had formed against the tyranny and rapacity of the Central Government.⁴

1 "Territories Conquered From the Peshwa," Elphinstone, p. 21.

2 "The village communities are like little republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of foreign relations. They, too, last, when nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Mogul, Marathas, Sikhs, English—all are masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves. A hostile army passes through the country; the village communities collect their cattle within their wall and let the enemy pass unprovoked. It plunder and devastation be directed against them and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance, but when the storm has passed over, they return and resume their occupation. If a country remains, for a series of years, the scene of continued pillage and massacre, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceful possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return.... This union of the village community...is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence."—Minutes of November 7, 1830, Sir C. T. Metcalf.

3 "Mr. Dutt attributes the break-up of the village community to the pressure of the land revenue assessment.... The statement is without foundation. There is some doubt whether in the Deccan such a system was at any time in existence under the rule of the Marathas... The collapse of the village system, if it did exist in the Deccan,...occurred before the introduction of the British rule."—"Revenue Policy of the Indian Government," p. 56.

4 "Territories Conquered From the Peshwa," Elphinstone, p. 21.

This is sufficient to reveal that the village communities must have weathered the storm that swept over the Deccan ever since the accession of the last of the Peshwas. Though disintegration may have set in during the declining years of the late Government, we cannot accept the version of Lord Curzon's Government, in reply to Mr. Dutt, that "the collapse of the village system, if it did exist in the Deccan, . . . occurred before the introduction of the British rule." To lay the cause of the decline of our villages to factors long before their advent, may perhaps be tolerated, but to question the very existence of the village communities is to plead shameful ignorance.

True, the villages did not grow with the times. As Baden Powell put it, "The methods of cultivation are the same, the fields remain—*et superest ager*: the custom of ploughing and resting; the dealing with money-lenders; the daily gossip of the women drawing water at the well or sitting over their cotton spinning—these and all other features of village life, remote from the rumours of the world, will continue, no matter who is managing the estate."⁵ The ryot, then, was conservative, poor, and ignorant, and is even yet, after a century or more of British rule. May we ask, what is it that accelerated his progress toward poverty, and what were the factors that eventually cut the roots of his self-sufficiency, dwindling down whatever the centuries had preserved for him, till today the villages present a painful phenomenon of under-nourished and under-housed ryots, whose lives are an unceasing struggle from dusk to dawn until death comes to their rescue and stills their aching hearts? This is true of the millions of villages all over India. The answer to the poverty in the Deccan may be found partly in our history of the first 20 years of British rule already traced. Our narrative is now to show how the active but injurious interference in the lives of the village communities resulted in their disruption, and the strong centralised control, which set about to do for the villagers what they had so far done for themselves, proved, in the light of the years, a miserable failure. These innovations came 40 years after the British occupation of Maharashtra, and in no wise can the failure which resulted be laid at the door of that first group of able administrators, who, under Elphinstone, had recognised the importance of the villages being granted that scope and freedom of action which was the key, **not**

"When India, distracted by selfish war and court intrigue, presents an unbroken array of gaudy pictures in red and black only, these small villages in Maharashtra not only furnish us with instances of republican institution, but also give evidence of the existence of democratic principles to a greater or less extent."—"Maratha Administration," Dr. Sen, p. 212.

⁵ "Land Revenue System in British India," Baden Powell, p. 170.

only to the smooth functioning of the central machinery, but withal the most important step in inculcating within the ryot self-reliance and independence. It would be well to trace the origin of these village communities and learn how these "little republics" worked their own existence till the unwanted interference disrupted what well might have worked toward the happiness and prosperity of the agricultural masses.

The village appears, at first view, as a kind of primitive commonwealth, held together by the interests of its inhabitants; but further investigation shows it to be a minor branch of the feudal system of the earlier ages, the natural outcome of an unorganized Government. The data for such evidence is certainly scarce.⁶ The village polity grew in power and self-reliance in proportion to the gradual decrease of the central control. The village officials gained independence and inherent rights of occupation⁷ as the central authority weakened. These village officials, though purely the servants of ancient Government usage, had made their offices hereditary. These offices were sought by all the ambitious youth of the village, for wealth or even service might pass away, but the "wuttun," or landed property, given by the Sirkar, always remained a sure sign of livelihood and source of respect. Even the right of settlement in, or belonging to, a village was a mark of respectability indispensably requisite to all classes of ryots. The village became the only centre of civility, the only repository of civil rights; it was, in time, the **only** institution and object of attachment which the ryot possessed. "A village, then, may be termed a self-constituted co-operation, organized rather from primitive necessity of its inhabitants than by design, and strengthened and perpetuated by the hereditary succession of its office-bearers."

⁶ "(i) The village communities may have been the result of the settlement of tribes and clans of Seythian origin.

"(ii) That the villages were owned by bodies of aristocratic proprietors called Thalkaris, consisting of .. heads of village clans

"(iii) That these bodies may have held then lands jointly in one or more of the forms in which joint possession is possible, but that subsequently the village lands were sub-divided into definite shares on the same lines as those in Rajputana.

"(iv) That the tenants of the Thalkuris were the vassals who, on the general break-up of the village communities, became the tenants of the Government under the name of Upris."—"The Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Vol. II, R. G. Gordon, p. 428.

⁷ "It is natural that a new and ephemeral ruler could have no inducement to displace village officials, when he had everything to gain from their co-operation; and the spoiler of the country had only to make himself master of their person to extort the tribute of the village"—"Village Communities of the Deccan," R. N. Gooldine, p. 2.

These communities were undoubtedly of a most primitive origin, and were coeval with the villages themselves. In remote times, we may conjecture that a few cultivators, assembling together for mutual protection, would receive among them such humble artificers as their manner of life required; and confer their right of representation to the paramount power in any one capable individual among them. Increased prosperity would increase their wants, and the addition of a village priest, clerk, and astrologer, with several other additions, would bring the village staff to what it was on the advent of the British. The community so constituted would guard its independence most jealously against all newcomers.

The village thus constituted consisted of two principal classes of inhabitants—the cultivators and the office bearers, all of whom had a right of settlement, and were termed *Gaukurees*. There was, besides, another class who, either from poverty or other causes, could not obtain right of settlement, but who served society in one way or another and were suffered, through charity, to remain in the village. These were called *ooprees*. A further ethnological inquiry into the landed tenure gave us the *kumbi* or the farmer; the *thuluwaheek*, who was the proprietor of his field; the *moondwaheek*, who was the cultivator of his moond or lot; the *oopree*, who cultivated, but had no right of settlement; and the *owundkuree*, who also cultivated land which belonged to another.

Lands were also called after their kind, class, or tenure: the collective land of the village was termed *sewar*. The *wawur* was the cultivable land; the *kooruns* were the grazing grounds; the *gauran* or cow's land were those not brought under cultivation for some indefinite term; the *gutkoolee* was the land of an extinct family; *meeras⁸* was land held by heritage, succession, or patrimony; the *gaon-nisbut-meeras* was land belonging to the village in its own right; the *enam* was land granted as a gift; the *sheree* was land appropriated by the state for its personal use; the *mokass* were lands granted in villages, but the Government re-

⁸ "This word is of Arabic or Hebrew origin and was introduced by the Mohammedans. The Hindoos have no corresponding term, and it is probable that, under them, land as bona fide property was never possessed by the tenant cultivator. It was a distinguished feature of the Mohammedan rule, to endeavour to promote permanent cultivation, the Meerasadar being held responsible for the rent of his land, cultivated or uncultivated. The word may, therefore, have been introduced for the attainment of the object; or really, as the term implies, inheritance, from the people being considered the hereditary occupiers or proprietors; but the Emperor Akbar is said to have denied this, and to have claimed all land as the property of the state. The property of the soil is a question of little importance now, but the uses and abuses of the Meeras tenure require some consideration."—Report of Oct. 10, 1845," R. N. Gooldme, p. 6.

served a portion of the revenue for itself; and, finally, the *gaon nisbut enam* was land granted in *enam* by the village for a debt, or some other purpose, the village continuing to pay the assessment of such an *enam* village to ensure Government from loss. The power over the grants of land, moreover, always rested with the district or village officers. If the assessment were on the plough or the lump, then these officials were the annual estimators of the amount cultivated; and if, in the measurement, they were allowed to increase or diminish the size of the bigha according to the quantity of the land, they still were the virtual assessors. The power of granting *meeras* was sometimes given to the patel during the late Government, which added immensely to his prestige and dignity.

The village inhabitants were divided, as the result of private interest or conventional form, into the cultivators and office bearers, as noted. The former of these consisted of the *thalwaheeks* or *meerasdars* and *oopurees*. The villages had not possessed any stipulated or definable rights, but all its usages and interests, which were not prejudicial to Government, were tacitly allowed and seldom interfered with. Even the internal disputes were left to the judgment of the village *punchayets*, an institution with an old tradition much respected even by the new masters. Mr. Elphinstone had shown the utmost anxiety to maintain the *punchayets*, with a few innovations.⁹ Further evidence that the Deccan villages were not completely ruined, is borne by the first Commissioner, who found their system of watch and ward quite good, so much so that he wrote that "on the whole, murder or robbery, attended with violence or alarm, was very rare, and I have never heard any complaints of insecurity of property."

The self-sufficiency of an Indian village is best illustrated by the study of the functions that were performed by a body of twelve individuals of various professions, termed the "Barra Bullontee." They were the patel, coolkurnee, sootar, lohar, chambhar, khoombhar,

⁹"The institution of the *punchayet* was a restraint on patronage and bribery ... The intimate acquaintance of the members with the subject in dispute and in many cases with the character of the party, must have made their decision correct; and it was an advantage of incalculable value in this mode of trial that the judges, being drawn from the body of the people, could act on no principles that were generally not understood, a circumstance, which by preventing uncertainty and obscurity in law, struck at the root of litigation ... The *punchayet* appear even after the corrupt reign of Baji Rao, to have retained in a great degree the confidence of the people, they do not appear to have been unworthy of their good opinion. All answers to my queries (except those of one Collector) give them a very favourable character, and Mr Chaplin in particular is of opinion that in most instances their statement of the evidence is succinct and clear, their reasoning on it solid and perspicuous, and their decision just and impartial."—"Life of Elphinstone," S. Cotton (Rulers of India Series), p. 152

nehawi, pureet, joshi, guru, sonar, and muhar (the English denominations would be, with the exception of the Patel and coolkurnee, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the tanner, the potter, the barber, the washerman, the astrologer, the priest, the goldsmith, and the watchman). Others as the bheel, kolee, moolana, and chowgoole were added in later years. The Patel and the Coolkurnee were included in the Zamindar class, and were, by their position in the revenue hierarchy, the most respected officers of the village community.¹⁰ They supplied the link between the ryot and his overlords. This unique position made them most important in the eyes of their fellow-villagers, and to the state as its most valuable servants.¹¹

These were the village staff that served their community in the several professions that their very names indicated. These humble functions and their performance went to complete the economic existence of these petty republics. If we now turn to study the remuneration they received in return for service, we have, in miniature, a social state of the most perfect pattern. In return for the service rendered to the community this staff of officials, according to the value of their service, received from the villagers a remuneration in kind (crops) which served to satisfy the value of their functions.

The village staff was divided into three classes according to their position and importance to the community. The first class was comprised of the sootar, lohar, chambhar and muhar; the second, of the khombhar, nehwi, and pureet; the third, of the bhut, guru, moolana and mang—each division receiving a remuneration assigned to it by some former authority. Likewise, the first group received, at the harvest, 30 sheaves of corn; the second 25, and the third 20. This amount was given by the Patel from the farmer's stock.¹²

¹⁰ "The placing of a total amount of revenue on each village, and holding the Patels responsible for the amount, would, as before observed, place much of the internal management of the village in his hands. It made him the feudal lord of his holding. The Zamindar of his village—to use a revenue phrase—was the Government Meetsdar, whose every arrangement had, for its object the increase of cultivation"—"Village Communities of the Deccan," R. N. Goodine, p. 16.

¹¹ "The most important legacy which the British Government received from the Maratha administration was the direct relationship between the Government and the cultivating classes through the hereditary village headman. ... The Patel interprets the orders of Government to the villagers, he is the spokesman who explains the villager's view to Government."—"The Bombay Land Settlement and Village Administration," D. S. Modak, p. xii (Introduction).

¹² Report of Oct. 10, 1845, p. 10

The sootar was at the head of the artisans, and mended all wooden implements, built houses, and repaired carts; for the latter work he was paid extra; the lohar repaired and made iron implements; the chambhar made sandals, halters, whips, ropes, and bands. These three individuals were the most important to the agricultural community, so that, besides the usual remuneration, they were given several other privileges, among which, to mention one, was the right to sow in every farmer's field a strip of land with ralla (a cheap kind of grain), each containing four furrows. The farmer tilled and sowed; the artisans merely supplied the seeds and reaped the harvest of their share when ready. The koombhar supplied earthen pans, ovens, pitchers, water-pots, and jars, according to the breakage or necessity of each household; the other artisans claimed their pottery free, and the koombhar received, in return, whatever service they could do him in repayment; the nehawi had to shave all the farmers and artisans—but merely loaned his razor to the muhar; the pureet washed the men's clothes (the women did their own washing) at every monthly festival, and more frequently if called upon; the bhut performed marriages, named children, read the mantras over the dead, cast nativities, informed the farmer of the right time for sowing and reaping. His services were required in nearly every undertaking in life. The guru was the officiating priest, and his duties were mainly confined to the temple; the moolana performed for the Mussalman villagers what the guru did for the Hindus. The sonar's duties were those of a Government Potedar, or assayer. He inspected and assayed all coins for the revenue and was answerable for base ones. He performed a similar service for the villagers, as he assayed all coins and jewellery brought for his inspection, and adorned the bride for her wedding. The bheel was a village watchman who kept an eye on all suspicious visitors, traced all stolen property, watched over the belongings of Government officials visiting the village, kept an eye on the standing crops, and escorted the revenue to the treasury. The kolee had to wait on travellers or Government officers on their visit to the village, to procure for them water and provisions, and on their departure to convey their luggage to the next destination. The mang, it appears, performed practically the same duties as a chambhar, for he made ropes, baskets, muzzles for the oxen, ropes of hemp and raw hides. The duties of a muhar are difficult to define. Mr. Gooldine calls him "the watchman and the guardian of the village and the living chronicler of its concerns." He, it appears, was acquainted with everybody's affairs, and his evidence was required in every dispute; in some villages he acted as a "weskur" or porter at the village gate; in others, as "khuleweskur"

or guard of the stock-yard; while in some he was a "Gawo-weskur," or on duty at a chowri.

We have thus illustrated the functions of the staff of a typical Deccan village, and the picture now drawn is ample testimony of the self-sufficient and reliant communities that were dotted all over Maharashtra on the advent of the British. The above illustration of the village was given by Mr. Goodine in 1845, and therefore there need be no doubt of having drawn our information from a source which had traced the lives of our villagers quite a good many years before the arrival of the British.

Turning to the financial arrangements as between the villages and the late Government, we discern that a tolerable amount of latitude was given to the villagers and their officials. The land tax was fixed by the Patel and the Government officers after survey and inspection, for a fairly long term.¹³ The villages had their own special needs, such as the maintenance of the temple, its ceremony and religious festival, its alms to beggars and entertainment, especially to Brahmins and fakirs, its occasional amusements, its "nuzzurs" to superiors, its offerings to the Patel and village staff. All these entailed a number of expenses which, unless they were allowed by the Government from the revenue, were to be defrayed by tax on the village.

The charges for the temple, charity, and festival, were permanent and constant, and were raised by a fixed tax called "Salabad," while the less recurring charges were termed "Sadar Warid Puttee." Besides these, there were also emergency taxes raised for occasional expenses, such as repair of the village wall, payment of sebundies for defence, and for the buying of an enemy or an insurgent. In such a case, the village often incurred a debt which was paid off by an annual assessment included in the Sadar Warid Puttee or mortgage, or grants of land termed "Gaon Nisbut Enam," on the part of the villagers. The right to contract debts and raise its own revenue are a testimony to the freedom and independence enjoyed in a fair measure by our villages under the Maratha polity. But the greatest boon of all was the control the villagers exercised over their servants. If the village officers were not elected by them, it is equally true that they were neither appointed by Government, and although they had to obey their immediate superiors, the very nature of the village polity put them under the moral influence of the village opinion, as they were paid directly by the villagers. Enough evidence has been given to show how self-

¹³ "Maratha Administration," Dr. Sen, p 241.

contained were the Maratha villages. "The paternal supervision exercised by the Peshwa's officers, on the whole, secured the material welfare of the rural community and was not, therefore, unnecessary."

This remuneration of the village staff was termed a "huk" or right, and differed in its way of collection in different districts both as to designation, kind, and quantity.¹⁴ Some of the principal hucks in a Maratha village were the "goor," consisting of so many sheaves, levied at the time of reaping; the "nimboor" was a minor huk, collected when the corn was in the green ear; the "wanwula" was a tithe on various kinds of grains, tobacco, ambaree, hemp, and vegetables; the "adepade" was some grain levied by the Patel from each ryot's heap; the "aootkle" was some grain on each plough, levied by Patels of some villages, instead of the "adepade"; the "maparker" was levied by the Patel, who received two or more "pailis" of grain on every khundi; the "mooshaheera" was pay, either in money as servant or an impost in kind given to the village officers when not remunerated by Government; the "sulalee" was collected by the Coolkurnee when called to measure the thrashed corn; the "odha" was levied by the Coolkurnee, consisting of as much grain as he could hold with clasped hands; the "bagheet" consisted of a tithe on all garden produce other than grain; the "pandree" was a tithe of articles in kind from each manufacturer or vendor; the lion's share of this duty, like that of nearly all the others, fell to the Patel and Coolkurnee. Besides these, there were other minor imposts like the *Khureed kut*, *Khot putra*, *Jukat*, *Pewhood*, *Lugna Moorut*, *Shewsubjee*, *Dhungurs*, and the *Sallee koshtee*.¹⁵ There were so many others that it was difficult to describe them with any degree of method, for the custom of levying them was totally devoid of all order and regularity.

From what little we may collect of the hucks, it cannot be denied that the Patel and Coolkurnee had sufficient power to abuse and oppress the ryot, and especially so if they chanced to be favourites with the Governmental authorities. These hucks must have been few and tolerable at the dawn of their commencement, but years multiplied them beyond computation, while the Patel and his colleague must have invented a good number of them, which weighed heavily on the ryot,

¹⁴"The hucks were divided into two classes, those belonging to the "kalee" or land, and those of the "pandree" or interior of the village. The former consisted of a tithe, according to the custom of the village."—Report of Oct. 10, 1845, p. 19.

¹⁵"Khureed Kut"—on the sale of any property for making the deed of sale levied by the coolkurnee.

especially in years of scarcity, and did untold mischief to our erstwhile happy villages in the years that followed.

At the advent of the British, things could not have been worse. Added to the years of tradition which hung on the system of *huk*s, there followed the worst period of misrule in Maharashtra, which made the Patels petty rajas of their domain and exhibited our village polity to the newcomer as a hideous picture in lurid colours of fraud, deception, and accumulated neglect. Our system had never in itself been at fault; it had stood the test of centuries. All it needed were slight innovations, and perhaps a little more control from the centre, till such time when normal conditions might have revived the old energy. Be it said to the credit of our first Commissioner that he had fully judged the strength and weakness of our village administration, and even as Governor of Bombay (1819-1828), Elphinstone, though he pursued a policy of careful reforms, showed a scrupulous regard for old institutions.

This policy was not long continued. The successors of Elphinstone and Chaplin had a rooted notion that the villages and their administrative and financial status must be completely overhauled. In the years that followed, the new administrators set about—it may be said perhaps in justice to their enthusiasm—to bring the villages directly under a more centralised form of control. To achieve this object, the village staff, including the two officials, must no longer be economically dependent on the village community. This step laid the axe to the roots of an ancient tradition, plucked asunder the governed and the governing, (so far interdependent on each other), and destroyed it, perhaps never to be rebuilt.

The rest of our narrative is a study of this active interference of bringing the Patel and Coolkurnee directly under the central authority of the district as servants of the Crown, paid from the Government

"Khot Putra"—on the sale of crops by contract levied by the cooleurnee.

"Jukat"—a cess by the Patel and cooleurnee levied on each bullock laden with merchandise.

"Pewhood"—levied by the cooleurnee and the muhar on the opening of the store of grain, the one for keeping the account of it, the other for his labour in placing it.

"Lugna Moorut"—a turban and shawl levied by the Patel on marriages.

"Shewsuhjee"—tithes on vegetables levied by the Patel on market days.

"Dungurs"—shepherds who give one or more sheep to the Patel at the Dussera, and a little wool to the cooleurnee. As weavers they give a blanket from each loom to both officers.

"Salle Koshtee"—impost on different descriptions of weavers who contributed one piece of cloth per loom of the kind woven by them.

Treasury, morally bound to be first the servant of the State and next of the people. The system of hucks was to be abolished, and curtailment and strict scrutiny of the village accounts were contemplated.

By 1822 Mr. Chaplin wrote that the villages had no longer to answer the demands of sturdy mendicants who came in 30's and 40's to demand a day's meal; they had not to entertain public servants as in the past; they had no demand for purveyance to satisfy, no public cattle or horses to feed, nor was there the same necessity to bribe Government servants, nor were there any more of those fees, fines, and diverse indefinite claims on his purse. If these reforms could have been carried through at all, it would have been an achievement, not to speak of the time in which they were claimed as having been accomplished, because a good many of these abuses continued and continue even to the present day. The position of the village servants appeared to the Commissioner to have been bettered in the light of the fact that "they were now paid more regularly than ever they were," and that this advantage would "preponderate in favour of those of the present day." Time alone had to reveal the dire poverty into which they had sunk, for, while the Government discussed their scale of salary and if the lesser class of servants were any more necessary, the ryots, at the instigation of their new master, refused the payment of hucks. The position of the Patel and his colleagues may now be well imagined. Not being satisfied with the stoppage of hucks their "wuttuns" or the property in land also came to be questioned under the new Sirkar. Reduced to the worst possible level in monetary circumstances, the Patel lost all prestige and dignity, and had to occupy the position of the most inferior menial in the gradation of Government servants, the higher class of whom were to draw salaries of such munificent sums as to impoverish the country, and yet give it the lordliest administration in the world¹⁶.

The petty village charges were reduced by about two-thirds, and advertizing to the abuses that were committed under that head, wrote the Collector, the relief that would now be afforded from the extortion of the village heads left no ground for complaint. The inroad into the village funds had begun. The village expenses, termed the "Gram khurch," were made out of the gross Jumma and fell mainly on the

16 "Sunk in abject position in the world in the servitude of a foreign rule every

"that of the rulers" —"Dadabhai Navroji," R. P.

cultivating class. It had, so far, been estimated by the village officials, but now the Government was to think of a fixed percentage on the village revenue. The extra puttees¹⁷ that had been levied on the ryot were, under the British, "to keep pace with the diminution of expenses." In some villages the estimated expense out of the fund ran to 25%, and in good times nearly as much as 50%. Captain Robertson discontinued the levy of these puttees over and above the rent payable to Government. The Commissioner agreed with the Collector, for he believed that the levy of these extra cesses led "to indefinite exactions from the ryot beyond what was specified in the puttah."

The emolument of the village officers and their scale of salary became a painful source of discussion, adjustment, and re-adjustment during the period of the next 20 years¹⁸ till Mr. Wingate was charged with the function of its settlement in 1849.

A settlement of the emoluments of the Patels and Coolkurnees of the Poona Collectorate was made by Mr. Pringle in the course of his Deccan survey which, as we noted, he had undertaken about the year 1825. His settlement was suspended in 1834 as being heedlessly liberal, "whereas the allowance granted by it in excess of what the village officers had previously received" was held in deposit, pending arrangement. The sum deposited accumulated for the next four years; subsequently the Government of India in 1839 sanctioned a plan submitted by one, Mr. Mills, for the remuneration of the Coolkurnees and Patels. What these plans were, I regret the records do not furnish. The Government of India sanctioned Mr. Mills' plan, and ordered that both the village officials be remunerated accordingly. But Mr. Mills' plan was not put into execution, but that of the Commissioner, Mr. Vibart, who had submitted his own scale, which the Collector, Mr. Stewart, put into practice before the Government sanction for Mr. Mills' plan arrived. On this mistake being discovered, "it was ascertained that the allowances, according to Mr. Vibart's scale, were within what the Coolkurnees would have received according to Mr. Mills' settlement," and as the Vibart Scale, as it later came to be known, was the more preferable of the two, "it was finally decided to continue to pay" according to it. The same course was pursued in the case of the Patels. The Patels were paid from the sum deposited in 1831 on the suspension of

¹⁷ "The following are items of Siwaeec Jumma, or extra revenue, which the Mamluddar entered in his public accounts as Luggun Tukka, Patdam, Chitheen Musala, Khund, Gonaegarree Nuzi, toblmal, and sundry petty extra charges".

¹⁸ Letter No. 694 of Sept. 7, 1853

Mr. Pringle's arrangement, and had amounted to Rs.22,000. This sum was paid to bring the emolument up to the Vibart Scale, and was exhausted in 1843, and on urgent representation to the Central Government, a special temporary arrangement, pending a final settlement, was made. What Mr. Vibart's Scale was, we shall not know, save the fact that the remuneration of the officials varied with the revenue of the year.

Such had been the history of the varied changes in the emoluments of the Patel and Coolkurnees on the question of their payment by the new Government. In Sholapur, Mr. Pringle's settlement was "suspended in the year 1835"¹⁹ on the same ground of too much liberality, as in Poona. About two years later, in 1837, Mr. Pringle's percentage "for the commutation of cash allowances and hucks was reverted in the case of kulkurnees who were deemed inadequately paid." This percentage again received an increment in 1845 "in the case of the kulkurnees of a few villages."²⁰

These types of innovations, I believe, must have taken place in the other Collectorates also. Mr. Wingate, when called to settle these emoluments finally in 1849, was of the opinion "that it would be a great advantage and materially facilitate the future successful working of the settlement to ensure uniformity, as far as practicable, in the settlement of the several Collectorates."²¹

While these controversies continued regarding the scales of pay, the condition of the village officers, as noted already, had fallen to the lowest possible ebb. Three years before Mr. Wingate was commissioned to settle this much vexed question, he wrote, on the 10th September, 1846, the following:²²

"There was one other subject which engaged my attention during the settlement which was to ascertain the actual remuneration received by the village officers.... Besides fixing this compensation, I extended my inquiry to the entire emoluments now enjoyed by the village officers which, it has been long surmised, fall miserably short of an adequate remuneration for the duties required of them. Some receive nothing whatever and others a pittance below the pay of a common day labourer. The baneful effect of such a state of things requires no exposition. The village administration is the very keystone of our

¹⁹ Letter No. 462 of July 30, 1853

²⁰ Letter No. 462 of July 30, 1853.

²¹ Letter No. 135 of Sept 10, 1846

system. Upon it depends the security of property and persons throughout the country. Until it be placed on a footing of respectability and efficiency, all our reforms and additions to the superior branches of administration will be of little avail, and at best may be compared to the conduct of a builder who toils to raise a magnificent structure without the precaution of first securing for it a firm foundation."

Mr. Wingate further stated that such ignorance of the real extent of the evil was no longer to debar the Government from coming to the aid of these officials, since the new survey settlement had now put ample information at their disposal regarding their emoluments, so that further delay would not be ignorance but injustice. He had promised the Patels and Coolkurnees that they should no longer be left "in their present state of destitution and neglect." What one wonders at is what remuneration must have been settled by the Vibart Scale. The poverty of the payment must have been due to the remuneration being fixed upon the variable revenue of the year. With a falling revenue of these first 20 years, little could be expected by the village officials.

Captain Gooddine, who was considered quite an authority on the question of village polity in the Deccan, was against any changes of old custom that were not positively injurious to the villagers. He suggested that whatever extra remuneration it might be thought fit to give the officials, should be given as direct "pugar," and not on the principle of huk or bab; that this remuneration should be only enjoyed by the working official and none of his "Bhaobund" who had received it during the late Government; and that in fixing a new scale of remuneration, attention should always be paid to the features of the old.²² He further wrote that it was neither possible nor advisable to abolish the whole of the hucks. These suggestions were respected by Captain Wingate²³ when entrusted with the task of settlement.

The first set of Regulations, Act XI, regarding the village officials, was passed in 1843. (1) No hereditary officer was to hold more than one office, and he should appoint a deputy to any other office he might

²² "It is difficult to determine what method of remuneration is best calculated to ensure a correct performance of duty without pressing too heavily on the ryots. The advocates of the old system say that if the village officers be remunerated by the ryots, he, being as it were their servant, would be more likely to labour for their interest; but by this supposition it is incorrectly inferred that the interests of the Government and the ryot are at variance."—"Village Communities of the Deccan," Gooddine, p. 31.

²³ "The high admiration with which every student of history cherishes the memory of a great and good man like Sir George Wingate will not conceal from him the painful truth...of setting aside village communities."—"India in the Victorian Age," Dutt, p. 58.

profess to hold on hereditary rights. (2) No officiator would be allowed to share or assign his pay to any other person. (3) In the event of two or more parties claiming an office, it was required that they appoint a deputy, or share the office in rotation, and (4) in future appointments, only those who could read and write, know the Regulation and keep accounts, would be chosen to the office.²⁴

Closely following these regulations, inquiries were held to secure the efficient discharge of the duties of these hereditary officers, and statements were to be submitted to the Government respecting the emoluments of each office, their source, the number of sharers, the arrangements under which the duties were performed, and the recommendations of the officiating party.²⁵ It appears that it took four years (1813-1817) to submit a voluminous account to the Government.

This voluminous record, when placed before the Government of India in 1847, drew its attention to the fact that there had been "a fall in the remuneration of village officers since the country had fallen into British hands." But the correspondence, they said, showed that the expenditure which had been recommended to be incurred in raising the pay of the officials would in no way lead to an increase in the village revenue. All that it might do, was to procure greater integrity on the part of the village officers. If the Government were to control the stipends of the village officials, it was but natural that it had the right of "demanding some proportionate increase of revenue from them." Such was the selfish attitude adopted. Even the wutuns of the officials, they wrote, "have a tendency to assume the character of hereditary property," but the money payments now introduced could not be so perverted, as it admitted of "being easily withdrawn or transferred to a more competent individual." I trace these details to show the heartless and unsympathetic attitude adopted by men far from the actual scene. Liberty was given to deal with it as it pleased the Bombay Government, since it was a matter of local concern, but always subject to the suggestions made above.²⁶

Regarding the question of wutuns,²⁷ opinions of the Collectors of the Deccan were invited. The difficulty regarding the wutuns was that they were held by different sharers. The Collectors were of the opinion that such shares had existed "before the memory of men" and were

²⁴ Letter No. 272 of Aug. 11, 1852.

²⁵ Letter No. 2791 of Aug. 22, 1843.

²⁶ Letter No. 960 of Oct. 16, 1847.

²⁷ Letter of Dec. 6, 1847, (Collector of Poona); Letter of Dec. 10, 1847, (Collector of Nagpur); Letter of Jan. 10 1848, (Collector of Sholapur).

"recognized by the custom of the country." The shares were completely distinct, wrote the Collector of Ahmednagar, and according to the opinion from Sholapur, in the existence of separate shares where no legal objection existed, the conducting of duties was an easy matter. It appears that in 1849 the Government of India had resolved that if it became expedient, the hereditary offices would be abolished completely.

On 18th December, 1849,²⁸ the Government of Bombay authorised Captain Wingate to launch his investigations regarding the settlement of the wutuns of Patels and Coolkurnees. He was, besides, authorised to apply to the Collectors for any information required by him.²⁹ This settlement of the village officials was to progress side by side with the New Land Settlement. Captain Wingate³⁰ inquired of the Collectors, firstly, the names of the talukas of their district where the New Settlement had been introduced; secondly, if the huks on land in those newly surveyed talukas were abolished, and if so, what was the compensation settled on for the Patel and Coolkurnees; and, thirdly, if there were any rent-free lands of the Patel and Coolkurnee, or any which paid a quit rent or cess of any kind, and if so, which were the talukas that had such partially assessed service lands. These were the steps Captain Wingate took at the commencement of his labours. Dharwar was his choice of place in which to launch his scheme.³¹ It was the latter half of 1852 that witnessed the beginning of his labours.

The Proclamation of 3rd July, 1853, tells us that the settlement of the emoluments of Patels and Coolkurnees in the Dharwar Collectorate had received the Government sanction³² by which an adequate allowance in cash would be paid quarterly to those officials in each village; that this emolument would be strictly paid only to the officiator, whether he be a 'wutundar,' "goomashtee," or a nominee of the Collector, and that no assignment of this remuneration to any principal or co-sharer would at all be sanctioned. This Proclamation³³ was promulgated in all the Collectortates. This step brought the two important village officials once and for all directly under the Government. As paid servants of the State, they were now morally and materially bound to serve their immediate superiors, and sever all connections that had economically

²⁸ Letter No. 7288 of Dec 18 1849

²⁹ Letter No. 36 of Jan 20. 1851.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Letter No. 272 of Aug. 11. 1852.

³² Letter No. 3905 of July 8, 1853

³³ A slight change of words in the Proclamation was suggested by Captain Wingate on Sept. 10. 1853. (Letter No. 2349).

bound them to the villagers. That sense of mutual obligation which had been the basis on which the village officials and the villagers stood, was dissolved.

The Regulations³⁴ of 1853 proposed for the Poona Collectorate, came to be adopted with slight modification in all the districts of Maharashtra. The year 1853 marked an epoch in the history of the village settlements in the Bombay Deccan under the British.

The Patel and Coolkurnee were to receive a remuneration in cash of the amount fixed by the scales which allowed the Patel for the first Rs.1,000 of the gross revenue of his village, 3%; for the second Rs.1,000, 2%; and for the balance of the gross revenue beyond Rs.2,000, 1%. In addition to these percentages he was to receive a fixed annual allowance of Re.1 when the gross revenue ranged from Rs.11 to Rs.20; of Rs.2½ when it ranged from Rs.31 to Rs.50; and of Rs.10 when it exceeded Rs.50. The Coolkurnee was to receive for the first Rs.1,000 of gross revenue of his village, 5%; for the second Rs.1,000, 4½%; for the third Rs.1,000, 3%; for the fourth, 2%; and for the balance of the gross revenue beyond Rs.4,000, 1%. He was to receive, in addition, a fixed allowance of Rs.2 when the gross revenue ranged from Rs.21 to Rs.30, and Rs.10 when it was above Rs.30 and did not exceed Rs.1,000, and when it exceeded this amount, but was less than Rs.1,200, was to bring his salary to Rs.60.

The salaries of the officiators, fixed by the preceding scale, were the maximum rate of remuneration; but an addition to the fixed portion of the allowance had also been proposed.³⁵ The salary of the officials (Patel and Coolkurnee) would be paid to them quarterly from the taluka treasury in cash. The salary would vary with the fluctuation in the amount of the gross revenue of the village. The gross revenue of the year 1850-51 had been chosen for the calculation of the remuneration, only as an example. The cash commutations for huks on land paid so far, were now appropriated to provide the salary of the officiator. The direct levy of a huk from the cultivators of alienated land was abolished, and their value appropriated for the remuneration of the officiators. The "Pandurgunna" huks were also abolished and their collection was forbidden by a Proclamation, and no provision for the abolition was made beyond the adequate salary. The "Mamool

³⁴ See "Letters on Ec at the Poona Land Record"

³⁵ See "Letters on Ec

"Mooshahira" was also appropriated, but if the salary of the officiator fell short, the whole or any portion of the "Mamool Mooshahira" was to be resumed to provide the officiator with Government approval, or otherwise it was to be paid as a fixed allowance over and above the salary assigned to him. In spite of these additional aids, if the salary still fell short, the official enam lands had to be taxed to make up the deficit, but the cess so imposed was in no way to exceed the full survey assessment of the official land. Failing all these expedients, the Government was to make good the deficit, as was done in the case of wutuns, of which the total enrolments were less than the remuneration for the officiator, according to Vibart's Scale. All official lands belonging to each wutun were to be either wholly tax-free or subject to a quit-rent, less than the survey assessment. These lands were to be entered in the accounts under the head of Enams as "Kussur," "Meeras," or "Burakarwutunee Zeemeen." Nothing could debar the Patel or Coolkurnee from relinquishing his official land when so disposed, and every such officer was at liberty, after the introduction of the settlement, to relinquish by "razeenama" any whole field or fields entered in his name, and on such relinquishment the land was to be entered as Government land subject to the full survey assessment. Each officiating Coolkurnee was to receive a fixed allowance for stationery from the "Gaon Khurch" or village expenses. The potgee or subsistence money that had been given to the Patel and Coolkurnee from the "Gaon Khurch" was entirely retrenched, as the salary was sufficient for their support, wrote Mr Wingate.

Taking into consideration the village expenses for a period of five years (1845-1850) for nine talukas, Captain Wingate made certain proposals as to how the expenses under the different items ought to be rightly disposed of. The average yearly expenditure on account of the village charges in the nine talukas amounted to Rs.41,135-15-6, which was disbursed as follows:

	R. As Ps
1 For stationery and contingent expenses incurred by the Coolkurnee	9,581- 3-10
2. Subsistence money or batta to Patels	2,486 14- 3
3. Subsistence money or batta to Coolkurnee	3,005- 2- 2
4. Dhurmudhas or charitable pensions	7,137- 1-10
5. Wurshasun	977-15- 4
6. Offerings to Hindu Deities by the Patel	6,266 15- 4
7. Offerings to Hindu Deities by the Coolkurnee	64- 8- 2
8. Other parties	2,758-10- 8
9. Spectacles for the entertainment of the Hoolee, Devali, and other holidays	
10 Appropriated by the Patel and Coolkurnee on holidays	

	Rs As.Ps.
11. Pay to Battah Hurree peons	36-13- 6
12. Nuzzur or presents to Collectors at the Jummabundy	1,989- 5- 9
13. Nuzzurs to Deshmook, Deshpant etc.	977- 5- 0
14. Nuzzurs to Kajoe, Chitnees, Naik and other Hukdars	1,820-14- 9
15. Sirpas to Patels	36- 6- 6
16. Paid to Ruckwaldars	26- 0- 0
17. Repairs to village chowrees, temples, and Government kutcherry	193- 8- 9
18. Oil for lights and other petty charges for village kutcherries	68- 2- 4
19. Allowances to village Eskur and Mahr	26-14- 8
20. Repairs to watering trough for cattle	6- 8- 8
21. Gifts to Fakirs, mendicants, etc.	750- 0- 0

Such were the items on which 6 per cent of the land revenue was expended. A large amount of this expenditure, according to Captain Wingate, was appropriated by the Patel and Coolkurnee. Even in those items of an indefinite character (Nos. 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12) a large share of the money remained with them.

Under the settlement of the remuneration of the Patel and Coolkurnee, their wutuns had been appropriated, and there was, therefore, no longer any ground for permitting them to appropriate any portion of the village fund in light of the sufficient salary that was now to be given to them, wrote Mr. Wingate. His further suggestions were that since the Coolkurnee was to receive an allowance for stationery, neither he nor the Patel should receive travelling batta or subsistence money when absent from the village on their duties. By this step it would prevent the withdrawal of these officials from their village, except on urgent grounds, it being desirable that they should always remain at their village. The retrenchment thus effected would save Rs.9,600.

The suggestions on the remaining items of expenditure were that (1) the "Dhurmadar" and "Wurshasun" pensions which had not been disposed of should only be continued during the lives of the present recipients. On their death a sum of Rs.8,000 per annum could be saved; (2) the allowances for religious services (Dewasthans) need no longer be continued in light of the fact that such expenses were only tolerated at the accession of the British Government, who were then desirous of leaving the village economy on its former footing.³⁶ "But

³⁶ As regards the upkeep of the temples from village expenses, Captain Pottner wrote in 1819 as follows. "Under the circumstances there seem to be three modes of proceeding. The first to fix a liberal amount for the support of the temples in the future, the second to confirm the total assignments now apportioned, and the third to stop all payment and break up the establishments.

"The latter I reject entirely as being totally at variance with the benevolent policy of the British Government."—Letter No. 538 of Aug. 31, 1819.

the case is very different now after a lapse of nearly 40 years," and so. "I think," continued Mr. Wingate, "it must be admitted that we may now safely deliberate as to the experience of contributing towards the support of Hindoo village temples." The strict attitude of neutrality adopted by our Government, said Mr. Wingate, must support our new attitude of only allowing the use of a public fund like the village expenses for the welfare of the villagers in general and not toward the maintenance of any religious institutions either Hindu or Muslim. The sum thus saved to the credit of the village fund would be Rs.9,000; (3) the expenses for providing spectacles of entertainment were equally of a religious nature and hence objectionable on that ground, and, besides, such occasions of religious festivals were utilized by the village officers to appropriate sums of money from the village fund. "If the villagers wish for them, they will always have it in their power to provide them out of their private fund." This, I believe, was a wanton destruction of the few amenities of life that the villager richly deserved, and which could have been easily spared. The saving effected was Rs.3,000; (4) the expenditure of items from 11 to 20 were not objected to, except the repairs to religious edifices, which were to be stopped, and more attention was to be paid to public buildings, chowris, village wells, dharamsalas, schoolhouses, and such others; (5) the last item of gifts to fakirs and mendicants was completely stopped and strongly condemned. Every sane thinking man will agree whole-heartedly with Sir Wingate in this commendable step so long overdue. This wise action procured the handsome sum of Rs.750, which had been so far criminally wasted.³⁷

Turning to the constructive programme of Captain Wingate, from the savings effected,³⁸ his foremost proposal was the setting up of village schools, for whose maintenance, he said, "an annual revenue of Rs.60 would suffice for the support of the school, namely, Rs.48 for a school-master," and other expenses could be defrayed from the balance. That portion of the village fund that remained over after the expenses of schools, was to be applied to the repayment of public buildings, the planting and care of trees, or any other object of public utility. The

³⁷ Report No. 235 of April 29, 1853, paras. 52 to 70.

³⁸ "The saving of the chiller effected from the year 1854-55 in which Captain Wingate's scale was first introduced into the talukas of Sewnere, Indapur, Pabul, Poorundhar, Bhimthury, and Havaillee, and also from 1856-57 when similar savings took effect in those of ('*) and Mawul, have been kept untouched... pending the final decision,... i.e., whether the same are to be applied to educational purposes or otherwise. . ."-Memorandum of June 30, 1863, by Acting-Collector A. Grey.

village fund was to be kept by the mamluddar and a committee appointed for the purpose.

Whatever may have been the pious wishes of the good Sir George Wingate, his innovation may be criticised in the words of Mr. Romesh Dutt: "The Indian Government, with every honest desire to do its duty, is unable to secure the material welfare of the people, because it is not in touch with the people, does not accept the co-operation of the people, cannot by its constitution act in the interest of the people"³⁹ This statement is true at all times, and more as regards our village polity that came to be based upon principles which divorced the governed from the governing. The village schools remained a pious wish,⁴⁰ as all other rural uplift schemes ever since have. The British officials and their servants would be the last, as years proved, to understand what was essential and beneficial in the life of these simple ryots.

Captain Wingate's suggestion for the village expenses was accepted by the Government, with the exception of the annulment of the religious expenses (Rs.9,090-2-2), which the Government said could not be appropriated, for the feelings of the people would be deeply averse to such a proposal, and, besides, Government wished to be better assured as regards the misappropriation of such expenditure by the village officers.⁴¹ This wise and generous step goes to the credit of British administrators.

In 1855 the settlement of the village officials' remuneration, as introduced by Captain Wingate, commenced to spread, side by side, with the new survey and assessment⁴² In May of 1856, the "mamool moshahira," or former cash allowance, had to be continued.⁴³ With the exception of the Mawul Taluka, the new remuneration was introduced in the whole of the Poona Collectorate, and the abolition of all direct levies on Government and alienated lands by village officers was

³⁹ "The Government of a people by itself has a meaning and a reality; but such a thing as the Government of one people by another does not and cannot exist. One people may keep another for its own use, a place to make money in, a human cattle farm to be worked for the profits of its own inhabitants"—John Stuart Mill, "Economic History of British India," R. Dutt, p. xvi.

⁴⁰ Mr. D. S. Modak wrote in 1928: "After having visited over 500 schools in villages... I can say from personal experience that the state of many a school-house is deplorably bad. The accommodation is inadequate, the rooms are ill-ventilated, with the result that the eyesight of many children is impaired."—"The Bombay Land System and Village Administration," p. 252

⁴¹ Government Resolution of November 8, 1853.

⁴² Letter No. 448 of Sept. 21, 1856; Letter No. 2248 of 1856

⁴³ Govt. Order No. 6501 of Nov 8, 1853

carried through.⁴⁴ During the years 1853 to 1857, we find a number of letters⁴⁵ which passed between the Government and the Collectors regarding the settlement of the remuneration of the village officials in the various newly surveyed talukas. Thus Captain Wingate's proposals were being put into effect all throughout the four years 1853 to 1857.

In 1857 it was found that frauds were incessantly practised by the revenue offices, when the hukhs, which were settled on a fluctuating revenue, came to be adjusted annually.⁴⁶ It was decided in 1858 that these settlements should now be on a fixed amount calculated on the average receipts for the last five years, but subject to modification when the claims of the receipts were finally adjusted by the Alienation Department, or after ten years.⁴⁷

Captain Francis, who succeeded Mr. Wingate, had the satisfaction, in 1859, of informing Government that the late Survey Commissioner's proposals regarding the allowances of Patels were introduced in all the newly surveyed talukas, and he could state from experience that they were working out successfully. The plan adopted was the payment of an allowance from the year's revenue, calculated on a fixed percentage scale, and an annual cash payment as salary. The first was a fluctuating amount, being calculated on the year's revenue, the second (the salary) was a fixed payment.⁴⁸ Thus have we traced the trend of events that affected the lives of the two most important of village officials. It now remains to consider the fate of the remaining members of the staff of the once too prosperous "barra bulloontee."

In 1860, by which time the scale of remuneration for the Patel and Coolkurnees had been fully established, the Revenue Department called upon the Collector of Sattara to consider also that the lands of the inferior village servants (whose employment was no longer useful to the community), if confiscated, would make a sum available for the better remuneration of those village servants like the Mahar and Ramoosee, who perform quite valuable service to the state, but were often insufficiently remunerated.⁴⁹

With the above suggestion in view, the inferior servants of the

⁴⁴ Letter of Oct. 18, 1856

⁴⁵ Letter No. 308 of July 23, 1856, Letter No. 2841 of Sept. 11, 1857; Letter No. 4915 of Nov. 15, 1857

⁴⁶ Letter No. 3030 of Nov. 3, 1857

⁴⁷ Letter No. 199 of Jan. 18, 1858

⁴⁸ Letter No. 55 of Jan. 26, 1859

⁴⁹ Letter No. 1915 of May 28, 1860.

village were divided into three distinct classes. The first class consisted of servants like the Chowgulla, Khot, Gowda, Mahar, Ramoose, and Mang, who were still of value to the village society; the next class consisted of village servants "who, though not useful to the Government," were of use to the community, such as the Kazee, Joshi, Sootar, Lohar, Chambhar, etc.; the final class consisted of those "whose services, though perhaps formerly of use," were not required either by Government or the community. They were the Muckadoom, Mahazum, Dongay, Mooshriff, Kooma, etc. The first class of servants was to be allowed to retain possession of its holding on the payment of one-fourth of the annual survey assessment; but the "Nuzerana," on succession, was to be paid. Those in the second class were considered as persons who no longer performed the service for which the grants were originally made, and their lands should, therefore, be subjected to a full assessment, but those who held their lands by a grant under sanad, by a competent authority should be allowed to continue to retain their holding on the same payment as the first class. The fate of the servants in the third class needs no comment.

Major Etheridge, whose name is well-connected with the first Inam Commission, requested in 1864 that similar treatment as that meted out to the inferior village servants in Government lands, should be dealt out to the same class of servants in alienated villages.⁵⁰ Mr. W. Hart, the then Revenue Commissioner, when requested to give his opinion, said that he was unable to agree with Major Etheridge; he even could not agree with the measures, though modified later at his request, which Government had already adopted regarding the inferior village servants in Government villages. He could not, therefore, recommend these measures advocated to be adopted toward the holdings of "bullootedars" in villages not belonging to Government.⁵¹ The Government, in a Resolution (1865), upheld Major Etheridge's opinion.

We have thus traced the gradual inroads of the new Government into the economic existence of our Deccan villages. The beginnings were made by Mr. Chaplin, to be continued by Mr. Mill, Mr. Vibart, and Mr. Pringle, till Captain Wingate's reforms came in 1849. From 1850 to 1859 we had Wingate's suggestions, inquiries, and the eventual ac-

⁵⁰ "There were...certain classes of political service and official holders with whom the Alienation Department was only indirectly concerned. They may be classified as follows. A. Government officers; B. Useful to Government and villages; C. Useful to village only; D. Useless alike to both Government and village."—"Narratives of the Inam Commission," Col. Etheridge, p. 46.

⁵¹ Letter No. 1419 of April 28, 1865

ceptance of his proposals that put an end to the old village self-government, and introduced that strong centralisation which had been the aim of British policy in every department of Indian administration. This policy of centralisation sapped the independence and the initiative for self-help in the years that followed.⁵² It created that spirit of helplessness that undermined the creative faculties and crippled the energy to develop. In brief, it reduced the growth of our villages and killed within them the germ of growth for their betterment. The Government undertook to do for the people what they had so far done for themselves; and the years proved that they singularly failed in the mission they undertook, which had, at its very commencement, the seeds of failure within itself. The seeds were selfishness, lack of sympathy, little desire or understanding of village welfare, and, above all, a rooted and false idea of their own administrative ability, not to mention a contempt for all that was Indian.

⁵² "It is a lamentable fact that these ancient and self-governing institutions have declined and virtually disappeared, under the too centralised administration of British rulers. Some degree of trust in the leaders of the villages, some power in revenue, criminal and police administration, and a careful and sympathetic supervision for the prevention of abuses, would have enabled these communities to render good service to the present day. No system of successful self-government has been introduced after the old forms were effaced...and an alien Government lacks that popular basis, that touched with the people, which Hindoo and Mohammedan Governments wisely maintained throughout the centuries."—"India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 197

CHAPTER III

LAND ADMINISTRATION

(1818-1868)

THE year 1800 was momentous for the city of Poona, for Nana Furnavis died, "and with him truly departed all wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government"; not only, may we add, in the political field, but also in the economic management of the Peshwa's dominion.

The mamlutdars in Nana Furnavis' time were selected from families of respectability and character. The office was conferred on persons of trust without any agreement to the amount of revenue to be drawn from the districts; and to avoid injury to the Government and the ryot, only people of experience were chosen to fill this office of trust. These persons at the time of their nomination, sometimes, though not always, paid in advance to the treasury a portion of the revenue.¹

Having received the sanad, the mamludar assembled the patels of the villages. An account of the collections of each "mouza," in the hand-writing of the Coolkurnee, with the mark or signature of the Patel, was drawn up. The customs and all other items were included in the receipts and expenses. From this *Tunkah* or *Kumal* the value of mainsurunjams, villages, or shares of villages, etc., were deducted, and the balance constituted the *Ayeen Jumma*, or ordinary receipts, as distinguished from the *Siwace Jumma* or the extra revenue.

Under the supervision of the mamludar, the heads of villages were allowed to exercise considerable latitude and discretion in raising or reducing the revenue, or the terms under which the ryot had been persuaded to cultivate. In case of necessity, the mamlutdars assisted the ryots by allowing balances of rent to remain outstanding as tuckavi, to enable them to purchase seed or cattle, taking from them a promissory note for the amount. "In short, no means of conciliating the ryot to cultivate were omitted."

The rents were not entirely payable in cash and were remitted by the villages to the mamlutdars by "hawalla" or orders on the Sawkars. The ryots, in like manner, often paid the Patel by similar assignments. "The latter mode was most prevalent, so much so that it is estimated

¹ "Account of the Revenue Management," Chaplin, p. 144.

that scarcely 25 per cent of the revenue was paid directly in money."² It was this, as we have previously marked, that made a great difference in the condition of the ryot, when, with falling prices, they had to pay their instalments to Government in cash and also the Sawkar's interest. When the ryots paid in cash, they gave the local coin of the district. If any arrears remained due, the extortion of which would cause the ryot distress and hindrance to cultivation, a respite was allowed till the period of the first kist of the following season; but if the balance could not then be realised, it was excused and written off as a remission.³ Any other extraordinary failure or destruction of crops always met with indulgence.⁴

It was a strange fact in the land management of this kulwar, or individual settlement, that no puttas or receipts of payment were given to the ryots. There was an understanding subsisting between the ryot and the Coolkurnee which led them to dispense with this security. The credit for this mutual goodwill must, according to me, go to the credit of our village system.

The wisdom and moderation that marked this early management made the Kulwar settlement of Nana's time the basis on which the foreigners settled their revenue, forgetful of the changes in time and circumstances which led to such unhappy results during their first twenty years (1813-1833) of land administration. The intervening period (1800-1813) was one of the unhappiest in Maratha history. Not only did the years hurry the downfall of the Peshwa, surrounded as he was by intrigues at his Court at Poona, but his following also could not even count upon a mediocre administrator whose honesty and labour might have saved the entire disruption of the wise administration of one of the ablest of Maratha statesmen.

In the last years of the Peshwa, the *Swace Jumma*, or the *Jastee Puttees*, added on in such numbers to this item of revenue that it told heavily upon the already crumbling resources of the ryot. Added to this was the farming system, which though not entirely a new innovation, aggravated the already existing evils. The office of the mamludar, instead of being conferred as a favour on persons of experience and

² "Report Exhibiting Fiscal and Judicial Administration," Chaplin, p. 156.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁴ "In the case of villages falling into arrears, Gyutkool lands, or lands thrown up by Meerasdars, or left waste owing to the decease of the owners, were sometimes disposed of on Meeras's tenure to other ryots for a price paid for the same, which was applied toward the discharge of public dues."—"Report Exhibiting Fiscal and Judicial Administration," Chaplin, p. 162.

probity, as previously noted, was put up for auction among the Peshwa's attendants, who were encouraged to bid high, and sometimes disgraced if they showed a reluctance to enter on this sort of speculation. "The mamluddar, thus constituted, had no time for inquiry and no motive for forbearance. He let his district out at an enhanced rate to under farmers, who repeated the operation till it reached the Patel."⁵ To such a level of degradation did the economic and revenue management of the country sink. The effects of such a system may well be imagined. Every individual from the mamluddar to the Patel was interested only in the amount of revenue that could be squeezed out of the ryot, irrespective of the actual state of the cultivation. It was the individual's means of payment, not the land he occupied, which was the scale on which he was assessed. No moderation was shown and every means and pretext were employed to extort the utmost out of the ryot before the arrival of the day when the mamluddar would have to relinquish his charge.⁶ There are no two opinions on the mismanagement during the rule of the last Peshwa.

It was this disrupted land revenue system that fell to the lot of the newcomers. The task to set right what had been so cruelly mismanaged was undoubtedly no labour of small magnitude. The difficulties that faced the first British administrators have been already related, and though they often blundered, they have shown a sympathy and understanding which their vast correspondence⁷ reveals amply, and which will always stand as a memorial of their unflinching labour.

At the accession of the British, the Maratha system of land administration, as under the able Nana Farnavis, was revived, or at least an effort made in that direction. The mamluddars were restored to their former authority, but were not given that discretionary authority to in-

⁵"Territories Conquered From the Peshwa." Elphinstone, p. 38.

⁶"Amidst all this evidence a regular account was prepared as if the settlement had been made in the most deliberate manner. This account was, of course, fictitious, and the collections were always under-rated, as it enabled the Patel to impose on the next mamluddar, and the mamluddar to deceive the Government and his fellows. In consequence of this plan, the assessment of land being proposed early in the season with some reference to former practice, Saund Waurid and other puttees would accumulate until the time when the mamluddar came to make up his accounts; it was then that his exactions were most severely felt, for he had a fixed sum to complete, and if the collection fell short of it he portioned out the balance among the exhausted villages, imposed a justee puttee, or extra assessment, to pay it, and left the Patels to extort it on whatever pretence and by whatever means they thought proper." "Territories Conquered From the Peshwa." Elphinstone, pp. 39, 40.

⁷See "Letters on Economic Conditions, 1818-1826."

crease or decrease the rents as they had under the former Government. The settlement was made on the basis of the former rates or durs, as far as they could be procured or ascertained, whether they were based on former survey or established on usages. The method of abatement, reduction, and remission was adopted in times of scarcity. The farming system was abolished. The settlement was in its main features a village settlement (*ryotwar*) since it was left to the Patel to settle the amount of individual rents. If the manfutdar felt the settlement unsatisfactory, he was entitled to send his karkuns to settle the revenue with the ryots. The Jummabundy was to rise gradually according to the "Istawa" granted; but since this "Istawa" was founded on very imperfect data, resting on generally assumed views of former realizations than on any actual resources of the soil, it could hardly be trusted. To state briefly, there were two modes which were commonly observed by the early British administrators in making thus *ryotwar*, or, as it was sometimes called, *kulwar* settlement: (1) The first was to fix the amount of settlement of the whole village and then distribute in detail among the body of ryots. (2) To settle the rent of each individual ryot and then to form the aggregate the Jumma or "Beriz" of the whole village. In this mode it was requisite to inquire the amount of revenue that was previously paid by the settled village for a succession of years under the former Government, to ascertain how far those amounts of revenue were reasonable, the actual land cultivated, and the principles on which the rates of assessment were determined. Many of the extra puttees or cesses were abolished, and the settlement was to be made inclusive of "umuls," huks, village expenses, and other items of deduction. Such were the steps taken in the early years of the land settlement under the British.

In spite of all the vigilance and care, things went from bad to worse, and even while the able Mr. Elphinstone was Governor of Bombay (1819-1827) the cruel facts of over-assessment were being brought home to his ears. Asked in an evidence before a committee of the House of Commons what appeared to him as the particular imperfection of the revenue system, and if he could suggest any means of obviating it, Mr. Elphinstone said that the principal imperfection was the too high assessment and its fluctuation and uncertainty which fell heavily on the agricultural class.⁸ A farmer was never certain, at the beginning of the year, what he would have to pay, as it was settled

⁸ "East India Papers, 1830," p. 151.

every year.⁹ "No Native Prince demands the rent which we do," wrote Bishop Heber in 1826, after having travelled through India and visited British and Native States. The proportion of the land assessment to the produce was extremely uncertain; but it was generally reckoned at from one-third to one-half.¹⁰ When Elphinstone was asked if the condition of the people would improve if the assessment were lowered, he replied that "it certainly would." Though Elphinstone wrote that the foundation for assessment was the amount paid by each village in the time when people considered themselves to have been well governed, and deductions were made in proportion to the diminution of the cultivation, often followed by further remissions, it appears that in actual practice the revenue officers failed to adopt these principles. The biographer of Mr. Elphinstone, observing on the assessment, said, "There can be little doubt that the early assessment of the Deccan, as of other Provinces when they first came under British administration, was higher than the people could afford to pay."¹¹ This oppressive assessment in years of scarcity often failed to be paid entirely by some ryots, and when Mr. Chaplin was asked as to what recourse the Government took in years of such failure by the committee, he replied that the general community of ryots were subjected to an extra assessment from 5 to 10 per cent.¹² This cruel method of bringing home the assessment at any price stood in strong contrast with the indulgence and care of the cultivating class in the days of Nana Furnavis; and it affords us food for thought as to how the Commissioner, who in his voluminous correspondence had shown such deep sympathy, confessed before the Committee of this extortion.

There can be little doubt that the high assessment, added to the other causes already related in our history of Maharashtra between 1818 to 1838, was responsible for bringing about the necessity of a new survey contemplated by Mr. Elphinstone as far back as 1824, and to be

⁹ Besides this uncertain collection there was the yearly fixing of rates. "It must open the doors to a vast quantity of bribery, extortion, and oppression."—Ross Mangles, Director of the East India Company, in "Evidence Before a Select Committee," Report, p. 276.

¹⁰ "East India Papers, 1830," p. 166.

¹¹ "Are you aware of a great deficiency having occurred unexpectedly in the course of the last year?"—I have heard that a deficiency has occurred; I can hardly say, unexpectedly.

"To what cause is that to be attributed?"—I speak entirely in the dark; but a survey was in progress for the purpose of reducing the assessment....

"When you left Bombay, had you reason to anticipate a still further decrease of revenue?"—No further decrease of revenue than was intended to be made by the survey."—"East India Papers, 1830," pp. 172, 174.

¹² Brigg's Report of 1821

the only way of arriving at better results and of saving the rapidly falling revenue. A drastic curtailment of the assessment was perhaps the only way to save the ryot from an economic depression of a serious nature. In 1821 Captain Briggs had contemplated a survey, but in the absence of reliable information it had to be given up; Captain Robertson's survey showed so enormous an assessment that it could not be adopted.¹³ The same errors dogged the steps of Capts. Adams and Challen, and their rates were never put in force in Sattara. The failure of these attempts was mainly due to the very high level of rates based as they were on the former large realisations. This, together with the bad seasons, accounted for the serious failure of the revenue in the years 1825, 1826, and 1827.

In spite of the strict orders of the Commissioner that the assessment was to be low, the conditions during 1818-1828 were so complex that it is hardly a matter of wonder if the administration went astray.¹⁴ The old kumal and tanka¹⁵ rates became merely nominal on account of two reasons. One was the fact that the burden imposed by money rate, which was fixed when prices were high, was considerably increased by the depreciation in the value of money, and these rates could not be generally collected. Secondly, in almost every village, lands of the former mirasdars were given out to the "Upi" for cultivation at reduced rates.¹⁶ To the complicated nature of rates was added the great diversity of land measure in use.¹⁷ Such being the state of affairs, it

¹³ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 345.

¹⁴ "Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Vol. I, Gordon, p. 19.

¹⁵ "Previously to entering upon the land assessment in the Deccan, it may be of use to give some definition of two of the terms which are of most common occurrence in all discussions with land assessment in the Deccan, I allude to the Kamil or Kumal, and the tunkha settlements. Both appear to have been formed by the Moghuls or their delegates, at different periods, in different parts of the country, on a view of the productive powers of the villages in prosperous and tranquil times when the Government was enabled to establish a high maximum rent. In process of time, as cultivation and population extended, the standard has been frequently altered. The Kumal in its general and usual acceptance appears to be in effect what the literal meaning of the word imports—the full, entire, or complete assessment. In some districts, it bears a reference to a survey supposed to have been made in the last years of the Adil Shahee dynasty, but of which no record remains; whilst in others it is of evidently modern date as established by the Marathas."—"Report on the Fiscal and Judicial Administration, 1824," Chaplin, p. 18.

¹⁶ "The greatest irregularity of assessment had prevailed and still prevails throughout the country, large quantities of land exceeding what is recorded in the account, being held at reduced rates in some cases, whilst other lands are greatly over-rated."—Commissioner's Circular, "East India Papers," Vol III, p. 833.

¹⁷ "Of the land measure in use there is great diversity.... In some villages the measurement and classification are still ascribed to the period of

was natural that all the collectors and the Commissioner recommended a general measure of survey and assessment in the Deccan.

Mr. Pringle, the then Assistant Collector of Poona, had, as we have already remarked, been appointed about 1825 on special duty to introduce a new land settlement in the Poona District. He adopted principles that had hitherto been completely new to both natives and Europeans. From time immemorial the land-tax in India had always been a share of the gross produce of the soil. The proportion may have varied at times, but the principle had always remained the same.¹⁸ In Mr. Pringle's opinion, the proportion of the gross produce which could be taken without absorbing the whole of the rent, varied with the numbers, wealth, and skill of a people. Hence, his measure of assessment should be on the surplus which formed a part of the gross produce of the land after deducting all expenses, which alone would be a fair measure wherewith to gauge the ryot's ability to pay the assessment. This he defined to be that "portion of the whole money value of the average gross produce, estimated at an average price, which remains after deducting all outgoings on account of labour and capital, each item of this being calculated at its ordinary and average rates."¹⁹ Besides, he thought that by proportioning the assessment to the net produce, and keeping that proportion moderate, the country would revive its productive power, and land would assume a new value²⁰ With this end in view, Mr. Pringle directed all his energy to collecting data that would give him the net earnings of the ryot after the deduction of all cultivation and other expenses.²¹ He was, besides, aware that the total cost of production was much higher in the case of inferior soil; hence the monetary condition of the cultivator of an inferior patch of soil would not enable him to pay the same proportion as the possessor of more fertile soil.

Mr. Pringle proceeded to enquire concerning the average gross

Mallick Umber's authority, but the variations which have been made, render it of very little use in forming our present settlement...."—"Report of 1824," Chaplin, p. 21.

¹⁸ "The principle of a share in gross produce is found in the Institute of Manu...and in the theory, if not in the practice, of every Government which has attempted to methodise the assessments by fixed rules. It was the principle professed by Todar Mal (1560-1600) and Malik Ambar (1600-1626), and it was also adopted in the ceded Districts of Madras."—"Poona Gazetteer," p. 370.

¹⁹ Pringle's Report of Sept. 6, 1828, para. 1.

²⁰ Pringle's Report of Sept. 6, 1828, paras. 7-40, and "Poona Gazetteer," p. 380.

²¹ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 380.

produce of each class, as to the kind of crops grown; their rotation, the average amount of produce in an extraordinary season, etc.; and also by crop experiment. His measures may be briefly stated as (1) to divide the soil into classes; (2) to ascertain the average gross produce of each class; (3) to discover the average cost of producing this amount, and (4) to find the net produce of each class by deducting the average cost of production from the average gross produce.

To arrive at the actual net produce which was to be the measure of assessment, the most minute inquiries were to be held. In arriving at these averages, care was to be taken to procure them from all the villages for the same year and month, and to use the same weights and measures. In calculating the cost of cultivation, the number of bullocks required for ploughing in different kinds of soil in a given quantity of land, the estimate of their daily work, and the annual charge per acre on that account had to be arrived at with reference to the cost of their food, their purchase price, a fair interest on such cost, the number of years for which they lived, and insurance against casualty. Next was the cost of manual labour per acre to be determined by the number of hands required to cultivate a given quantity of land and their wages in the case where hired labour was employed. Lastly was the cost of food, manure, implements, fees to artificers, sacrifice and offerings, and every item of labour and stock that could possibly form a charge before the produce could reach the market and a tolerable security on all advances from which no immediate return was possible. All these were to be calculated and a fair allowance made for risks.²² Such were the labours set before the new survey settlers. Mr. Pringle gave *kaifais* which ran into rolls of paper 30 yards in length.²³ The average gross produce was then converted into money at average prices of past years and the net produce arrived at by deducting the cost of cultivation.

The assessment was based upon past collections by ascertaining what average proportion of net produce had been absorbed by the past revenue collection in every village. The average proportion of the villages of the same group was compared, and a general rate calculated which was to be taken as the standard rate of assessment. By an extension of these operations Mr. Pringle believed that he would arrive at a standard rate by which assessment would be easily regulated.

The economic history of Maharashtra between 1828 and 1838 bears

22 "Land Revenue of Bombay," Vol. II, A. Rogers, p. 102.

23 "Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Vol. I, Gordon, p. 25.

evidence of the havoc this new assessment played wherever it was introduced. When it was more than obvious that the assessment in the first ten years was too heavy for the ryot to bear, the conclusions of the new survey, though it lessened the assessment of some talukas, raised those of others beyond all computation. To take Poona, for instance, the new assessment caused a reduction of 11½% in Junnar and Pabal, and 25½% in Khed; and an increase of 76½% in Indapur, where the famine of 1824 had played havoc; 13¼% in Bhimthadi; and 27½% in Purandhar.²⁴ In practice, however, over most of the District the new rates were never actually enforced. To sum up the labours of Mr. Pringle in Mr. Dutt's words, "The measurement, however, was faulty; the estimates of produce were erroneous: the revenue demand was excessive; and the settlement operations ended in oppression."²⁵ By 1835, the districts had sunk so deeply into abject poverty that a new survey had been entrusted to the charge of Mr. Goldsmid and the able and energetic George Wingate.

Turning to the causes for the breakdown of Mr. Pringle's settlement, the complexity of the system may be partly responsible, but there were other causes to which "must be attributed its failure, more than to any defect in the execution."²⁶ The most important cause was the heavy assessment which was based on past collections. As Mr. Wingate observed, "To adopt as a basis of assessment an average of past collections was to admit that the previous settlement was not heavy as a whole, but merely required being properly apportioned, which the yearly increasing poverty and wretchedness of the people and the declining cultivation and a progressive fall in the price of grain notwithstanding a diminished supply (due to a failure of crops) all tended to disprove." It is unfortunate that a man of Mr. Pringle's intelligence and approved ability could not realise the impolicy of adopting the past collections as his standard, in spite of the Government's warning in the

²⁴ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 393.

²⁵ "India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 52.

The Administrative Report of 1872 stated that Mr. Pringle's settlement "had the result of aggravating the evil it had been designed to remove. From the outset it was found impossible to collect anything approaching the full revenue.... Every year brought its additions to the accumulated arrears of revenue and the necessity for remissions and modification of rates.... Every effort, lawful and unlawful, was made to get the utmost out of the wretched peasantry.... Numbers abandoned their homes and fled into the neighbouring states. Large tracts of land were thrown out of cultivation; and in some districts no more than a third of the cultivable area remained in occupation."— "Administrative Report of the Bombay Presidency," pp. 41, 42.

²⁶ Wingate's Report on Indapur Taluka, para 10

matter on past occasions.²⁷ Even Mr. Pringle, writing on the altered condition of the country since it passed into British hands, said, "An average of money collections which goes" to the prosperous period of former times "will give a much higher rate than can be easily realised now."²⁸ The assessment which he fixed was less than the former *Kumal* assessment by only 15% to 20%; though the prices had gone down to an untold extent, and the people reduced to abject poverty.

Besides these unhappy errors, the districts, where the new experiment was carried out, were in no condition to bear a test other than the complete relief they were so badly in need of. Let us note especially the condition of Poona before and after Mr. Pringle's settlement.

"In 1819-20, 1823, 1824 and 1825, Poona suffered greatly from cholera and from want of rain. So great was the panic that large numbers left their homes. For many months, parts of the district were deserted. In 1823 the rupee price of grain in Poona was sixteen pounds (8 seers), and people died in the streets for want. In 1824, a year remembered as a year of distress, rain again failed, especially in the country within 100 miles of Poona . . . Much bad grain was sold and sickness was so general that a large number of people left the country. The loss of cattle was very severe." Such was Poona's condition when Mr. Pringle began his survey. Turning to the years that followed 1825, we have as melancholy a picture as before.

"In 1832 failure of rain was followed by much distress. . . . Orders forbidding grain dealers unduly raising their prices are said to have done much to reduce the distress. 1833 was a year of scarcity in Indapur. 1835 was a bad season all over the District, and in 1838 Indapur I from want of rain."

To make matters worse, ever since the advent of the British, the prices had shown a regular fall. In 1820 the spread of tillage brought down the prices till in 1824²⁹ jawari was sold at 7½ pounds the rupee, and bajri at 46 pounds. In 1826 and 1827 prices fell to 88 and 128 pounds for jawari and 64 pounds for bajri. They rose slightly in 1828,

²⁷ In a letter to Mr. Chaplin, the Bombay Government wrote: "In Baji Rao's time the assessment was strained by the farming system to a pitch and created many complaints among the people; and though Nana Farnavis' rate may have been more moderate, yet circumstances were so much more favourable to the sale of agricultural produce in his time than at present, that an assessment that was reasonable then would be high now."—Letter of Oct. 24, 1824, "East India Papers," Vol. III, p. 860.

²⁸ Pringle's Report, para. 127.

²⁹ See "Letters on Economic Conditions" for the tables.

and in 1829 they again fell to 130 pounds for jawari and 136 for bajri. In 1830-31 prices rose, to fall once more in 1832 to the level of 130 pounds for jawari and 70 for bajri. This terrible fall in prices reduced the husbandmen to poverty and caused Government a great loss in revenue.

Amidst such general conditions, such an elaborate scheme as that adopted for land settlement could not but fail. No proper statistical information could at all have been available; only fraud and oppression reigned supreme. The English officials were new to the territory; they were in many cases men little adapted to civil administration of such a highly technical nature, being officers in the army.³⁰ The conditions denied any innovations, except relief; and the native subordinates, at whose door the failure of the scheme was later put, were mostly men in whom the ryots had no faith and hardly any trust.

"Our present land revenue system is founded upon the celebrated Joint Report of Mr. Goldsmid, Captain Wingate, and Captain Davidson, which has been described as 'a source of plenary inspiration' to all survey operations undertaken ever since." All attempts to arrive at a theoretical ideal of assessment by discovering the yield of different soils and fixing the Government demand accordingly, were given up in favour of purely practical considerations as to the capability of the land and the general circumstances of the ryot.

What was new in this assessment was the spirit of moderation in fixing the assessment. Nearly twenty years of an oppressive revenue policy and the consequent reduction in cultivation, poverty, and extreme privation, had at last brought home the wisdom of being moderate in making calls upon the already reduced resources of the cultivator.³¹

³⁰ "The Collectors were, ordinarily, military officers without experience of the extraordinary complicated revenue system which they found themselves called upon to administer. Even so a large part of their time was taken up by police duties. Both these causes led to the entrusting of the revenue system to Indian subordinates and those not of the best class"—"The Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Gordon, p. 20

³¹ "We cannot possibly err on the side of lowness of the assessment as regards the ryots, and the total exemption would be the furthermost point to which we should go, had we solely their interest to look to. In framing an assessment, therefore, in which the well-being of the ryot is what we have in view, the question becomes—What is the utmost Government can let him have? and not—What is the utmost they can let Government have?" Hitherto, the latter question has unfortunately too often been considered; and it is one which is utterly impossible to settle with neaty, without rendering the ryot liable at any time to be called upon for more than a fair share of his profits in the soil.... It may sometimes be a struggle to be generous, but it always meets with its returns, and it is now generally allowed, that to yield much to the ryot is to receive much from them"—Mr. Fraser Tytler's Report of April 19, 1841, paras. 68, 69.

Having adopted these wise maxims, the settlement commenced at Indapur. The native establishment was divided by Captain Wingate into three departments.³² namely, measuring, classifying soils, and accounts. The measurers were first directed to proceed to a village and there survey certain numbers, and forward the returns of the number of acres such fields were found to contain. The engineer officers carried out another investigation independent of the measurers, and if their data tallied with those previously taken, it was assumed that the whole lands of the village had been, in the first instance, correctly surveyed, and the presence of the measurer no longer required. On the completion of this operation, the turrims were directed to commence the classification of the soil. To ensure uniformity of classification, and obviate the chances of fraud and error, one uniform standard of classifying the soil was made applicable to the whole pergunna. To attain this end, nine descriptions of soils were considered sufficient:

Blacks	Reds	Burruds
First	First	First
Second	Second	Second
Third	Third	Third

Samples of these soils were selected by the turrims in the presence of the officers, who, having made themselves acquainted with their various characteristics, decided that they should form the standard by which the whole land of the pergunna should be classified. Mr. Wingate was fully aware that numerous cases would arise where it would be impossible to decide whether it was red or burrud, and its estimated value could only be arrived at by a comparison of it with one or other of those classes. Besides, this value was only an index to the productive power of the soil without any reference to the situation. Facilities for cultivation, wells and nullas, a convenient road by which the produce might be conveyed to the market or the homestead, were circumstances which would be ultimately taken into consideration when fixing the assessment, but were never to be taken into account when determining the classification of the soil.

In order to ascertain the relative value of the nine classes of soil, their productive power, the capital required and expenses incurred in cultivating them, the most experienced turrims were directed, without reference to the amount of assessment, to draw out a scale, which, by assuming a certain value for the best description of the soil, should ex-

³² Progress Report No. 210 of Nov. 26, 1852; Progress Report No. 139 of Sept. 6, 1853.

hibit the relative values of the inferior classes. The scale adopted after various tests and some alterations was the following:³³

	Reas	As. Ps.
1st Black	300	12- 0
2nd "	240	9- 7
3rd "	170	6-10
1st Red	200	8- 0
2nd "	130	5- 2
3rd "	60	3- 0
1st Burrud	100	4- 0
2nd "	50	2- 5
3rd "	35	1- 5

The experiment having proved successful, the survey operations were extended to other parts, and in the course of a few years separate surveys were organised for the Poona and Nasik Collectorates and also the Southern Maratha Country. The plan followed was the one traced above, with a few modifications as the physical features and circumstances of the district may have necessitated. The accumulated results of these labours took the form of what is known in the revenue history of the Bombay Deccan and Southern Maratha Country as the Joint Report of 1847, prepared and presented to Government ten years after the commencement of the new labour in Indapur.

The principles of the new settlement, as explained in the Joint Report, were (1) that it was based on the assessment of each field separately; (2) that it granted a long lease for thirty years, and (3) that it abandoned the basis of produce for the estimate, and substituted the basis of the actual value of lands for distributing the assessment.

The cultivator could never be ejected from his holding while he continued to pay his assessment. The engagement for the occupation of each field was to be renewed every year, which enabled the ryot, according to his means, to occupy any new lands, if he so desired, or even to relinquish the ones he held and so accommodate the extent of his liability to his means. The fixed field assessment for a period of thirty years gave the ryot full advantage of that long lease, without burdening him with any other condition beyond that of discharging the assessment.

³³ Sketch of the plan pursued in revising the assessment of Indapur Pergunna, dated April 15, 1837. (By George Wingate)

Mr. Dutt in his "India in the Victorian Age," gives the following relative value of the soils in annas- 16, 14, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4½, 3 and 2.

for that single year to which his engagement extended. He thus had all the security of the tenure which a lease could confer, without any attendant liability and risk which his limited capital and poor circumstances would be insufficient to meet.

The amount of assessment and how to levy it was the next important factor in the new settlement. It required, beyond all others, the exercise of great judgment and discretionary power by the settlement officer. The first requisite was a clear understanding of the nature and effect of the past assessment which was to be procured from the previous trustworthy accounts, or from local inquiry among the people; next, independent statements of the annual revenue settlement of each village were to be prepared, and finally detailed figure statements were to be furnished, exhibiting the source and amount of every item of revenue from land, alienated or otherwise, within the limits of the village where an assessment was proposed. These detailed accounts, coupled with the past revenue history of the district, obtained from local inquiry, and a knowledge of these, aided by the statements of the capabilities of the district, were regarded as sufficient data by the promoters of the New Land Settlement, to arrive at just conclusions on the amount of assessment to be imposed.³⁴

A copy of the Joint Report, having been sent to the Court of Directors, received the following compliment:

"We have perused with great interest this Report which we consider to be in the highest degree creditable to the officers by whom it has been prepared. We entirely approve of your intention of causing it to be printed when the proposed modifications³⁵ in some of the rules contained in it shall have been finally determined for the purpose of being used as a manual in all future surveys."³⁶

Various disputes arose on the introduction of the Joint Report rules regarding the occupancy,³⁷ and several other questions on land settle-

³⁴ Joint Report, paras. 69, 70, 74, 75 and 76

³⁵ In a letter No. 6900 of Nov. 16, 1849, from Secretary to the Government to the Rev. Commr. (E. H. Townsend), the Government made changes in Rules 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, according to the suggestion from the Court of Directors.

³⁶ Extract para. 37 from a Despatch No. 10, of May 30, 1849. The Despatch was a reply to a letter of Oct. 13, 1848 (No. 126) forwarding the Joint Report.

³⁷ Prior to the Joint Report, the question of occupancy was laid down in the Bombay Regulation Act No. XVII of 1827 in the following terms: "Section III—The settlement of the assessment shall be made with the occupant of the land. The cultivator, when the land is held by him direct from the Government, is to be considered the occupant; and when it is not so held, the

ment. When the Mirasdars failed to pay their rent in Sholapur, Captain Wingate was of the opinion that their lands ought to be confiscated. But it appeared that before such a step could be taken, the Collector's order, according to Rule 5 of the Joint Report, must be supported by a legal decree. Besides, Mr. Fawcett, the Commissioner, wrote that he was not aware of any precedence of the actual sale of miras lands. This reveals that till 1851, the year of this controversy, the miras tenure was open to dispute. Captain Wingate finally wrote in 1852 that such fields of the Mirasdars should be put up for sale to the highest bidder. The purchaser of it, however, became a mirasdar, or "acquired a better title to the land than that of any other holder under the survey rules"³⁸ In a case in 1851 between a ryot, Shreenwas Deshpandia, and the Collector of Poona, regarding the right of a ryot to dispose of the timber on his estate, held on a ryotwari tenure, Captain Wingate, when requested to decide the issue, said that Shreenwas Deshpandia had the absolute right of disposing of the whole of the timber under Rule 10, and that even if his occupancy were of a recent date, he had under the same rule "an equally absolute right of property in all trees" grown upon his land. The object of the rule was to promote the growth of trees by securing a right of property in them to the planter, no matter what might be the ulterior motive of the ryot.³⁹

This liberal policy was also supported by the Court of Directors, who expressed their wish thus:

"Our desire is that the cultivator should, as far as practicable, be left at perfect liberty, and that no restrictions should be imposed which are not absolutely required for the security of revenue."⁴⁰

It cannot be denied that the period following the Joint Report promulgated a more liberal policy, bringing the much needed relief in its train.

On the question of tenancy as it appeared in 1852, if the occupant of a field whose name had been entered in the Government book as the possessor of a particular field, desired to vacate the sub-tenant, then, according to the rules, it was the Collector's duty to uphold the right

person having the highest right or holding, recognised by the custom of the country or resting on specific grounds which intervene between the Government and the cultivator, is to be so considered."—"Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Gordon, p. 184

³⁸ Letter No. 58 of Feb. 23, 1852, and Letter No. 279 of July 15, 1850.

³⁹ Letter No. 1204 of Nov. 24, 1851, and Letter No. 646 of March 24, 1852

⁴⁰ Despatch No. 8 of March 17, 1852, para. 4.

of the occupant against his sub-tenant, who would have to give up his possession unless he could prove his right (1) to hold it for a longer term than one year by the production of a written lease; (2) or by showing his right to rest upon inheritance; (3) or by a common ancestor of the occupant and sub-tenant from whom both parties had derived their title. All sub-tenants, not holding a written lease or not claiming to hold inheritance as relations of the occupant, had to be viewed as tenants at will, and if required to give up the possession of land after the removal of the standing crop, they must do so.

This recognition of the proprietary right was of utmost importance to the new settlement. For, as Mr Wingate said, men of capital would be deterred from investing money in land if they were compelled to resort to the expensive process of a civil suit to recover possession of their land from a sub-tenant who merely rented it from year to year. Even prior to the new settlement, all such disputes were settled on the above principles, and it was now made known to the District and village officers as a part of the survey system of administration.⁴¹

This manner of supporting the occupant against a less well-to-do sub-tenant could only be practised so long as the revenue officers had a hand in the decision, and it was because of this that Mr. Wingate, to confess in his own words, was "anxious to avoid bringing forward the subject prominently, under the apprehension that it might raise questions of law which could not be decided without legislation." This problem of the occupant and tenant grew out of all proportion in the years that followed, and eventually it could be tackled by the legislature alone.

Besides this question of tenancy, the year 1852 also witnessed the right of a ryot to raise a building on his holding. The home authorities stated⁴² that the land itself, however, was declared, in Rule 5 of the Joint Report, to be the security for punctual payment of the assessment, and hence they could not admit the right of the ryot to appropriate it so as to "destroy or endanger that security." They desired,

⁴¹ Letter No. 176 of June 18, 1852.

"The only place," said Mr Wingate, "where he could not put the policy into force was in Badami and Bagalkot Talukas, where the Collector always insisted on asking the occupant to have his grievance settled before a civil court, and this policy he defended as being 'grounded on the interpretation he gave to the provision of Act XVI of 1838.'" "But now," said Mr. Wingate, "of late he has... reverted to the former practice, and now requires the sub-tenant holding at will to give up possession to the occupant when the latter petitioned him on the subject."

⁴² Despatch No. 13 of June 2, 1852, paras. 1 and 2.

therefore, that before the ryot was permitted to construct a building or other work not of an agricultural character, he should obtain the Commissioner's consent, who in granting his permission, was to consider that the public advantage so gained was worthy of the sacrifice of revenue which was entailed by the Government.

On this attitude of the home authorities, the Secretary to Government entertained a deep conviction that any restriction on the free agency of the ryots in regard to the disposal of land would inevitably lessen the value of the survey tenure, and detract from the security the land afforded for the realisation of the assessment placed upon it.⁴³ Besides the difficulty of finding whether an edifice was connected with agriculture or not, it would lead the local officer to exert prejudicial interference with the proceedings of the ryot, and thereby discourage enterprise and hinder the free application of capital, which would be disadvantageous to the progress of society and industry. The Directors saw the wisdom of the Secretary's objections and revised their policy in the ryots' favour.⁴⁴

Besides, the question of the relations between the sub-tenant who held land as previously mentioned from year to year, the mortgagee, and the occupant, occasioned a number of reports⁴⁵ from the Collectorates in 1853. Captain Wingate was of the opinion that the right of an occupant, as defined⁴⁶ by Regulation XVII of 1827, did not give a right of absolute property of the soil, but only a right of engaging with the Government for the assessment due upon it. If the occupant mortgaged or leased his land, he transferred to another, for a certain term, his right of possession, but never his right of occupancy, and consequently it was the occupant's name that was retained in the Government book. Though Rule 9 of the Joint Report intended to facilitate sale or the absolute conveyance of the right of occupancy, it was not to be applied to mortgages or leases. But according to the existing laws, mortgages and leases, under written engagement and also succession by inheritance, all conveyed a clear right of possession, and the Collector was bound, by Act XVI of 1838, to uphold that possession. This cleared the right that a mortgagee would possess against the occupant. On the other hand, a sub-tenant's possession ceased on the expiration

⁴³ Letter No. 264 of Aug. 5, 1852, (Mr. A. Malet).

⁴⁴ Resolution No. 6 of 1853, (from the Court of Directors).

⁴⁵ Report No. 334 of May, 1853, (Ahmednagar); Report No. 336 of May 12, 1853, (Belgaum); Report No. 829 of May 18, 1853, (Sholapur).

⁴⁶ See footnote on page 97 for the definition.

of the year, and if he held possession of the land "beyond that period in opposition to the will of the occupant," he dispossessed the occupant of his rights.⁴⁷ Thus Captain Wingate distinguished the rights of an occupant, mortgagee, and sub-tenant, in view of the law and land regulations. This explanation, when submitted to Government, received its approval, and Captain Wingate's letter was circulated for the future guidance of revenue officers.⁴⁸

In December of 1855, Government interference was once again called into question on "certain points connected with the rights of the occupants of land and their sub-tenants."⁴⁹ Various points on legal rights were at issue. (1) Were co-heirs to be respected in the event of an occupant petitioning for their summary ejection? The Governor in Council stated that law "does not give the Revenue authorities the power... of ejecting co-heirs at the request of the occupant under Act XIV of 1838." The co-heir could only be dispossessed if he had "usurped the cultivation of more than his legal portion." Further, "a non-occupant co-heir, cultivating his own share of an occupancy, has an equal right to cultivate, sub-let, or mortgage such share as the occupant has with regard to his portion." (2) Has a co-heir, who has all the lands on his name, the right to sell the whole to a third party without consulting the other co-heirs as well as the Revenue authorities? In such a case the decision was that "the rights of the co-heirs of the original occupant are in no way affected by such a transfer." (3) Must the sole occupancy always rest with a single heir and not be broken?⁵⁰ "If the eldest son or next heir of the occupant consents to the creation of a separate occupancy in favour of the co-heir, there is no objection to such a course." (4) What if the occupants were absent, or not in existence, and their lands were regularly cultivated by tenants? The tenants, under such circumstances, could, by a petition, hold the oc-

⁴⁷ Letter No. 334 of June 9, 1853.

⁴⁸ Government Resolution No. 4431 of Aug. 1, 1853.

⁴⁹ Government Resolution No. 5351 of Dec. 20, 1855

⁵⁰ "Further sub-division of these original occupancies was to be prevented by regulating their inheritance, transfer, and resignation as under:

"(1) INHERITANCE—In the event of the death of any occupant, the survey numbers or shares standing in his name, were to be entered in the name of his eldest son or next-heir (Rule 6).

"(ii) TRANSFER—Transfer was to be made only by 'occupants,' and then only if the whole survey numbers, or recognized shares, are as in Rule 9

"(iii) RESIGNATION—In the case of 'recognized shares,' if one share of the field was given up, either by resignation or decease of the shareholder without heirs, then it was to be offered to other shareholders, and if they or anyone else refused to take it up, the whole survey number was to be relinquished."—"Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Gordon, p. 187.

cupant responsible for the revenue and thus secure an opportunity of purchasing the occupancy for themselves. But should the occupant reappear and claim his privileges, it was the duty of the Commissioner to uphold his claim, provided he agreed to pay for any immovable improvements made by the tenants during his period of absence. The remaining two questions were, if the name of the occupant was fraudulently entered as the possessor, and the ryot was deprived of taking the occupancy on his name, "it should be decided in the Civil Court." And, finally, if a sub-tenant was ejected, considerate treatment was to be meted out to him, and the consideration for the same was lodged on "the discretion of the local authority" who was to be guided "by the peculiar circumstances of each case." In conclusion, the Governor in Council remarked that it would be desirable if these survey rules were left to operate without the aid of any special legislation, at any event, till such time when more distinct evidence was available regarding the incompatibility of these rules with the existing laws. This brought to a close some very important questions regarding the land settlement which had taken up the considerations and proposals⁵¹ of the Collectors of Nagar, Poona, Sholapur, Belgaum, and Dharwar.

In 1868, a new set of rules, according to Government Instructions,⁵² was submitted for the approval of Government to supersede those in force, "commonly known as the Joint Report Rules"⁵³. The chief object in the formation of the new code had been to make it conformable to the law for administration of the survey settlement as was enacted under the provision of Act I of 1865. In all cases where the principle involved, or the procedure enjoined, was opposed to the law, they either cancelled the old rule or brought it out in a new form, conformable to the provisions of the new Act.

The new land settlement had been hailed as the panacea for the evils of the old, and in spite of the general approval with which it was received by nearly the whole official world, we do come across a criticism by one, Mr. T. A. Cowper,⁵⁴ as early as 1858, which deserves our attention.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Letter No. 1088 of Oct. 18, 1854, (Nuggur); Letter No. 1099 of Nov. 2, 1854, (Sholapur); Letter No. 2014 of Nov. 15, 1854, (Dharwar); Letter No. 800 of Nov. 28, 1854, (Belgaum); Letter No. 2677 of Dec 29, 1854, (Poona).

⁵² Resolution No. 58 of Jan. 4, 1866.

⁵³ Letter No. 866 of Sept. 14, 1868.

⁵⁴ Commissioner for Alienations

⁵⁵ The complete letter may be found in File No. 41 at the Poona Land Records Office.

In breaking up the very lengthy letter of Captain Cowper, we are enabled to collect the main trend of his criticism in the following half a dozen important points:

1st. No system of classifying soils similar to the one laid down for the survey which requires such minute data, as distance from drinking-water, the facility or difficulty of procuring manure, the nature of the climate, and accessibility to markets, can be anything but most faulty; to determine the extent to which each of these numerous, varying, and uncertain elements operates in many cases, and the proportionate value to be attached to them, is almost a physical impossibility. Such a system of survey, no matter how perfect in theory, must always prove faulty in practice.

2nd. That the past collections which are accepted as reliable data for assessing a district, are just as likely to indicate correctly the assessment which should be imposed on each field or each group of fields.⁵⁶ Besides, too much was left to the discretion of the classifier and as-

3rd. That this simple and inexpensive plan of judging the assessment by past collections or by the discretion of the settlement officer, is just as likely to indicate the assessment correctly as the new method, and, besides, supersede the present costly method of obtaining results, the correctness of which was always open to great and reasonable doubt.

4th. That the present system of classification never has been, but certainly should be, carefully tested by comparison with actual production and value.

56 "The object of the classification is, it seems, merely to arrange land so as to facilitate the distribution of a certain amount of assessment on a District, such an amount being determined not with reference to its total productiveness as ascertained from the above classification, or by examining the field comprised in it, but with reference to its past collections, and to the survey officer's estimate as to its condition and capability. What is the theory here? Does the Government take any fixed proportion of the estimated average return of each field of each district? No. Does the Government take, to use Mr. Green's expression, a political economist's rent? No. As is admitted by the writers of the Joint Report (see para. 17), the Government takes as much of it as hitherto received, with so much, more or less, as the judgment of the assessing officer may suggest"—Letter No. 2832 of Sept. 1, 1858.

57 "It will be perceived at once...how much was left to the discretion and judgment of the settlement officer in determining the district demand from the past history and circumstances of the district and its villages. The utmost latitude for moderation was left to a considerate officer, and of severity to an inconsiderate officer. The fortunes of a hundred thousand tillers depended, not on fixed customary rates, but on the different judgments of different officers."—"India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 64.

5th. That the increased cultivation generally appealed to as evidence of the successful working of the survey has not resulted in any perceptible increase in produce.

6th. That the very reduction of assessment which, on the one hand, has benefited the ryot, has, on the other hand, increased his expense by bringing into cultivation land from which he formerly obtained the necessities of life, free of cost, which he has now to pay.⁵⁸

It appears that the above criticism on the new survey and land settlement was called forth when Captain Cowper was requested to give his opinion on the subject of the greater demand for land, which invariably followed the introduction of the new settlement rates, and particularly to the occupancy of land in the neighbourhood of large towns. This occupation of new land, according to Captain Cowper, was probably only applicable to garden lands, which always bore a high value, and was notoriously unduly favoured under the survey assessment.

The Government, in its reply to Captain Cowper's criticism, showed a deep aversion to that officer's conclusions on the success of the new survey. They wrote that it was this very system of survey that Captain Cowper had himself extolled as "impossible to overrate the value as contrasted with the date of things which it superseded." The Government was aware of the minute details required by the new method of survey as difficult to procure with perfect fairness and equality; but it by no means followed that it was to abandon every attempt at equal taxation and adopt once again an arbitrary standard. The statement

⁵⁸ "The reduction of assessment is believed to have afforded great relief to the ryot. That in many cases it must have done so, will scarcely be questioned; but is there any proof that the relief has at all been general; that it has at all been equal in its operation, or that it has really reached those for whom it was chiefly intended, and whom they supposed it would reach? It is certain that land not taxed before the survey, and from which the ryots obtained without cost some necessities of life, has since been brought under assessment (see Rule 11, 14 and 16, para. 84 of the Joint Report). Grass, fuel and building material which a ryot could formerly obtain from uncultivated land, have now to be paid for; and the question is how far the relief afforded to him on the one hand has materialized by an additional expense imposed upon him on the other.

"Under the survey rules, restrictions are imposed upon cutting trees on waste lands, and also those on cultivated fields. Such restrictions cannot but be vexatious, and generally open the door to abuse of authority. Is a ryot who feels his tenure secure under the survey settlement likely to recklessly destroy the trees standing on his field? (See Rule 11, para. 84 of the Joint Report.) Would not an additional assessment on land containing valuable fruits or timber trees serve every legitimate end, and at the same time, relieve a cultivator from Government interference?"—Letter No. 2832 of Sept.

that increased cultivation in the surveyed districts had not resulted in any perceptible increase in produce was an argument which would involve a waste of time, and was considered unworthy of discussion by Government. Besides, it surprised Government that an officer of Captain Cowper's acuteness and ability should hazard the opinion that the cultivation of waste land had been of no material benefit to the ryot because he lost the grass and firewood. Surely, said Government, if this were the case, he would not cultivate the waste land; "The Hindu labourer," it wrote, "is not such a miracle of industry as to cultivate land which would give him a better return, if left in a state of nature."

The only suggestion worthy of consideration was that the system of classification of soil should be tested by comparison with the actual production and value of the soil in a few selected villages, and for several successive seasons. A perfect uniformity of result, followed by perfect equality of taxation, was the main object of the survey.

The superintendent of the Southern Maratha Country was requested to report whether he considered that the accuracy of the system of classification could be tested by comparison with the actual production of the soil in a few selected villages, and for a few successive seasons, with a view to ascertaining whether equality of assessment had been approximately attained.⁵⁹

Captain W. C. Anderson explained to Government the insuperable difficulties attending an enquiry of the nature suggested by Government. We may recapitulate his main objections.

1st. Even if two fields of equal natural goodness were taken, after some years of cultivation, they would vary materially in productiveness according to the efficiency of the husbandry of many years back, not to speak of good or bad cultivation, sufficient or insufficient manuring, suitable rotation of crops, etc.

2nd. Again, supposing that two fields of exactly equal productive power could be found, it would be almost impossible to secure the application of exactly equal care in cultivation, methods, and implements.

3rd. There would always be cases in which even the relative natural productiveness would not exactly follow the relative valuation in the classer's scale; the classification was based on visible circumstances, while soils must frequently contain invisible chemical qualities

⁵⁹ Government Resolution No. 3540 of Oct. 25, 1858, (Bombay Castle)
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which influence the productiveness, but which defy detection by any agency we might apply.

4th Even if any practical end were capable of attainment, it would be of little value, since the present system of classification had so far worked very well. Besides, such inquiries always unsettled the mind of the ryots who could not disconnect them from an impending increase of assessment.⁶⁰

The Government, agreeing with the Superintendent, intimated to Captain Cowper that it was not its intention, for the present, to institute any enquiry into the actual production of the soil and value of the produce.⁶¹

The success of the new settlement was invariably judged by the tillage spreading over waste lands. This spread of cultivation, ever since the advent of the British, was looked upon by them as a sign of increasing prosperity;⁶² while the true reason was not far to seek, in so far that unemployment was one of the major factors that led to this heavy burden on land, resulting in a large output and fall in prices.⁶³ Mr. Anderson also stated that waste land, assessed at the highest rate was taken up before that assessed at a lower rate. Thus he put forth as due to the increasing prosperity of the people. But the more probable explanation might be that the ryot would rather occupy a field of good fertility with the expectation of a better yield, no matter how heavy the immediate investment.

Mr. Anderson was convinced that the prices had increased. He said it was not difficult to assign reasons for the prices of produce having risen. In the first place, as regards articles of food, there was probably an increased population, and certainly a large increase in cattle to

⁶⁰ Letter No. 386 of Dec. 21, 1858.

⁶¹ Resolution No. 1719 of May 5, 1859.

⁶² "Has the tillage of late years much extended in the Collectorates? —It is a very curious fact, but, from the returns I have of eight towns, I have found, in the different parts of the country for the purpose of ascertaining this point and comparing the quantity of their land in cultivation under the British with the quantity under the Mahratta Government that there was certainly less under our Government than under the Mahratta Government. The general belief is that cultivation has increased"—Col. Sykes, "Evidence Before the Select Committee, 1832," p. 160.

⁶³ "To what is the fall of prices popularly attributed in the country by the people themselves?"—The people appear as much at a loss as ourselves, some absurdly assert that the fall of prices is attributable to the failure of crops; but that is inconsistent with a low price. One reason assigned to me was the diminution of currency in the country. Another as superfluity of grain"—Col. Sykes, "Evidence Before the Select Committee, 1832," p. 176.

be fed; besides, the improvement in the circumstances of the people permitted them a more liberal home consumption than formerly. There was, in his opinion, a great increase in the area devoted to the production of articles, the prices of which depended on foreign demand, as cotton, oil-seeds, etc. The acres under cotton in Dharwar and Belgaum in 1842-43 were 254,021, and by the year 1856-57 they rose to 129,551 acres.

Writing on the salable value of land, Captain Anderson said that the high rates of assessment, both in the Deccan and the Southern Maratha Country, antecedent to the new settlement, had rendered the land of little value. The crop was then regarded as security for the revenue, and, besides, a greater part of the revenue was to be paid before the crop was ready for the market. This forced the ryot to seek the sawkar and sell him the harvest, often at a ruinous sacrifice, at the same time the whole agricultural population was obliged to sell to pay the Government dues. Thus with high assessment originated the whole evil, aggravated by the manner of collecting the instalments, working up its results by restricting home consumption, of glutting the market, and then lowering the price of all produce by the sale of which the assessment could alone be liquidated. The assessment had now been rendered moderate; land had acquired value and was considered sufficient security for the revenue, the time for the revenue instalments being fixed, the ryot had ample time to realise the value of his harvest by the deliberate sale of his crops.⁶⁴ This was the picture the Superintendent painted of the improved conditions, with a promising future.

Further, Captain Wingate stated that, about 1810, insufficient currency, the substitution of money assessment instead of crops, and of cash salaries in lieu of land, had reduced the prices of agricultural produce to the lowest level. Since 1812, £17,000,000 of bullion had been imported into India, and nearly the whole of it had been coined into currency. Money was, therefore, more abundant, and the prices of agricultural produce had risen, or at most remained stationary, instead of falling as production increased.⁶⁵

A perceptible change for the better could be seen after the new settlement. The critics of the new survey were of the opinion that things had begun to improve before the advent of the new scheme; anyway, however we may wish to detract from the success of the new land set-

[\] 64 Letter No 386 of Dec. 21, 1858

65 "Bombay Quarterly Review, 1857," Captain Wingate, pp. 234, 235

tlement, it cannot be denied that it was more humane in its ideals for promoting agricultural welfare.

Since 1868 the Bombay Land Revenue System had been much criticised. This criticism, based on years of experience, is beyond our study. As in the political, so in the economic history, the creators of certain actions with good intentions can be held little responsible for the evils that may follow in years to come. Our best summation of the labours of the good Sir Wingate are in the words of the great Romesh Dutt:

"It is creditable to Wingate that he exercised his irresponsible powers with moderation, tact, and humanity; that his guess-work in making assessment was performed with care and assiduity; and that his settlement relieved the peasantry of the Deccan from the misrule and oppression from which they had suffered for twenty years. The name of Sir George Wingate is remembered in Bombay as the name of Sir Thomas Munro in Madras, and of Robert Merttins Bird in northern India, not because their work was free from grave faults, but because they succeeded, on the whole, in introducing some order where chaos and disorder had prevailed, and in building up systems which lasted to our day."

INAMDARS

Inam meant gift or grant, and land held on an Inam tenure was that for which there had been an alienation of part or all of its rights by Government on behalf of the individual, or individuals, to whom that land might have been granted in Inam.

In the first twenty-three years (1818-1841), numerous claims to hold lands in Inam were put forth. Collectors and Judges were left to deal with such claims entirely on their own authority. The result was that their decisions varied from utmost harshness to tenderness, in accordance with individual opinions.⁶⁶

It was in 1841⁶⁷ that the question of alienations was taken up with vigour through the agency of Mr. Goldsmid, then in the Southern Maratha Country. Upon close inquiry he discovered that a large num-

⁶⁶ "Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Gordon, p. 70.

⁶⁷ "And thus matters stood till the year 1841, when the alienation question...came prominently forward through the energy of Mr. Goldsmid and received impetus which eventually led to final settlement."—"Narratives of the Inam Commission," Col. Etheridge, p. 23.

ber of claims were of a fraudulent and surreptitious character. The result was the re-organization of the Poona Daftari⁶⁸ and the appointment of a committee of two (1843) to inquire into the alienated lands of the Southern Maratha Country.

The committee appointed in 1843 proceeded with the inquiry for a period of nine years, till 1852, when it was transformed into an Inam Commission, and its labours were given a legal status by Act XI of 1852.⁶⁹ By this Act, Government was empowered to appoint Inam Commissioners to "investigate . . . the title of persons holding or claiming against Government the possession or enjoyment of Inams or Jaghirs, or an interest therein, or claiming exemption from the payment of land revenue."⁷⁰

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The Inams were divided into four classes, namely, Personal, Devasthan, Hereditary Service, and Political. The Personal Inams were again sub-divided: (a) Inams granted by a sanad from competent authority and were to be continued; (b) Inams held for sixty years, prior to the British advent, were to be continued only to the male descendants of the original grantee; (c) If the period was forty years, the Inam was to be continued till the death of the last surviving son of the incumbent,^{70a} and (d) Inams not continuable under these rules were to be resumed on the death of the incumbent. Devasthan Inams, for the support of mosques and temples, were to be continued permanently. Hereditary Service Inams, authorisedly held by official

⁶⁸ "By the Poona Daftari is meant Government Records of the Mahratta administration which cover a period of 88 years—from 1729 to 1818—with a blank of seven years from 1757-1763, the records of which were destroyed by the Moghuls. These records were naturally an invaluable source of information in connection with the subject of alienations, but previous to Mr Goldsmid's enquiry, its importance had not been realised, and its sources had remained unused"—"Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual."

⁶⁹ "Investigations under this Act proceeded steadily for a period of 11 years in Khundesh, the Deccan, and the Southern Maiatha Country, during which time a large number of claims were disposed of. The system of enquiry under the Inam Commission had, however, two defects:

"(a) Its operations were too slow and cumbrous, and it was not calculated to attain the end for which it was designed for a reasonable time

"(b) The Act only applied to the Southern Maratha Country and the Deccan, and not to Gujarat. In order, therefore, to carry out the same system in the latter districts, it would be necessary to appoint a special Commission

"It was finally decided, in 1863, to abolish the system of detail inquiry and to substitute a system of 'summary settlement' to be extended over the whole Presidency."

⁷⁰ "Bombay Survey and Settlement Manual," Gordon, p. 80.

^{70a} In the last two cases the claimant was not required to prove any specific grant; his assertion was taken as sufficient evidence of claim, subject to proof of length of holding, unless there was evidence to the contrary.

tenure, and not on the emolument basis like the wutuns of the Patel and Desai, etc., were to be continued permanently. The Political Inams were Jaghirs, "Sranjams," and were to be dealt with under such rules as Government might find necessary to issue from time to time.⁷¹

At the commencement of the new survey (1841) in the Government villages, it appears that alienated villages were also to be the scene of the new survey, irrespective of the introduction of the new survey rates which were to be "a question for future decision"⁷². But this step seems to have been suspended awaiting the sanction of the "Government of India to a reference respecting the extension of the assessment to such villages."⁷³

It was not till 1851 that rules relative to the survey of alienated villages were passed by Government. (1) The boundaries of all alienated villages were to be surveyed at Government expense;^{73a} (2) The lands of the alienated villages were only to be subjected to the usual revenue operations at the request of the alienee and his express desire to adopt the fixed rates of Government; (3) In the event of the alienee's consent, the expenses of the operation were to be borne by the Government; in the event of his not doing so at present, they would have to be incurred by the alienee himself in the future; (4) Lands held on the service tenure by hereditary officers were to be subjected to the survey operations, but they might not introduce survey rates; and (5) Villages in which the levy of land revenue had been deferred as an indulgence during the life of the present incumbent, were to be surveyed, but the new rates might not be introduced during the life of the present alienee, if he so desired.

For Inam lands to which no claimant could be found, a notice had to be issued in accordance with the provisions of Act XI of 1852, calling for the appearance of any party who might have a claim to the land. If any such claimant failed to appear in the given time limit, the land

⁷¹ The substance is from "The Narratives of the Inam Commission," Col. Etheridge, pp. 30-34.

⁷² Letter No. 1799 of June 2, 1841, (Bombay Castle)

⁷³ Letter No. 3166 of Oct. 19, 1841 (From D. Blane, Secretary to Government.)

^{73a} Government Resolution No. 2344 of June 22, laid down that "a notice should be issued to the alienees affording them a year's grace before enforcing the rule." Should they fail to take advantage of the introduction of the New Survey within one year while it was in the district, "they will in the event of a survey having to be made thereafter, be charged with the cost

was to be declared as *Khalsat*⁷⁴. If lands, besides being unclaimed, were also found uncultivated, a similar course as the one adopted above was to be followed. Should the claimant appear, the land was to be given over to him after an examination of his claim or connections with the property.

On an inquiry⁷⁵ as to whether an Inamdar, who held his land on the terms of a summary settlement, had an unlimited right to any forest produce, minerals, etc., just as any person who purchased waste land or redeemed the assessment due on cultivated land had by the sanction of the Government of India, the Bombay Government replied⁷⁶ that the same right might be extended to the Inam holders by the summary settlement subject "to the same reservation of special cases" as was made by the Government of India.

There was a class of landholders known as *Khotes* or holders of villages by sanads. In 1862, a question regarding the position and power of this privileged class was raised. It appears that, like other Inamdars, these *Khotes* had also possessed a hereditary right of management of their villages, but the peculiarity w is that their powers of fixing the rents to be paid by their ryots, appeared to be controlled by the Government "to secure due protection from exaction to the ryots."

Since 1853 a Draft Act had been framed "for the purpose of regulating and defining the relation between the Government, the khotes and the cultivating ryots"; but for various reasons no legislation had, till 1862, taken place on the subject.

The Government had so far exercised the right of periodical surveys of the *Khote* villages, and of revising the terms on which the *Kotes* were permitted to collect the revenue, to manage lands and to pay the Government tax. It had also been a practice to require the *Khotes* to execute an annual engagement, embodying the terms of the above agreement, and in default of their executing such engagement, they had been excluded from the management of their villages which were, for the time being, taken under the charge of the revenue authorities.⁷⁷ The *Khote*

⁷⁴"I shall follow this course," wrote the Commissioner, "unless you have any objection to urge against it, so that no mistake may be made with regard to such lands in carrying out the summary settlement." (To Mr Goldsmith.)

⁷⁵ Letter No. 1783 of Nov. 14, 1861.

⁷⁶ Resolution No. 5388 of Dec. 18, 1861.

⁷⁷"It from any proved and continuous mismanagement on the part of the khote, or khotes, a village comes under the Collector's charge, such a village after a report of the circumstance to the Government, will not be restored to the khote management" -Government Resolution of Sept. 20, 1861.

had no right to the profits accruing during the time of attachment, and even if a village was eventually restored, it would still be a question whether the profits intermediately collected were to be paid to the khote, or refunded to the persons from whom they were levied, or retained by Government⁷⁸

In 1860, the Inamdars raised a few questions on the introduction of the new survey in their villages—(1) They desired to know whether in the case of their adoption of the survey rates, they would be assisted by Government officers to collect the revenue if a ryot refused to pay, and help them, if necessary, even to eject a ryot from his holding; (2) Whether any payments that were made to Government by the Inamdars out of the revenue of their village could be calculated on the survey assessment of the village, and (3) If the "kudeem" Inamdars (those holding land in an Inam village) had encroached on the lands of the Inamdar, whether that encroached land would revert to the Inamdar of the village. By the "kudeem" Inams were meant those of date prior to grant of the village as Inam and held under Government and not under the Inamdar⁷⁹

In accordance with the Circular Orders of the Revenue Department, the first question was answered in the affirmative, with the exception that the kowls (agreement), "granted for a definite period were to be respected as they would be in Government villages." With reference to the second question, it was settled that where the payment to Government on an Inam village was a fixed sum and not a proportionate share of the revenues of the village, it was to remain unaffected by any alteration in the *Kumal* assessment of the village consequent on the survey. If, however, the payment to Government should happen to exceed the total survey assessment of the village, it should be reduced to that sum in accordance with the practice as regards joddee payable on joddee Inam. Where the sum payable to Government was a proportionate share of the village revenue, that sum was to be calculated on the survey assessment, whether it was more or less than the former assessment. As regards the last question, it was stated in the grants of the Inamdars that, with the exception of the "Hukdars" who remained under Government, all other rights were alienated to the Inamdar, and any encroachments on the lands or revenue of such alienated territory, if discovered, must revert to the Inamdar⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Resolution No. 1865 of May 17, 1867

⁷⁹ Letter No. 495 of Nov. 5, 1860

⁸⁰ Letter No. 1960 of Nov. 15, 1860

With the settlement of the "kudeem" Inams in the territory of the Jagirdars in the Southern Maratha Country there followed an interesting correspondence between Mr. Anderson and Colonel Etheridge. The question at issue was the disposing of the "kudeem" Inams in treaty villages. Colonel Etheridge was of opinion that the Government right to apply the summary settlement to the "kudeem" Inams was not affected by the fact of the Inams being situated in the States of rulers who governed their own territories independently, and whose relations were defined with the British Government by an agreement binding both parties; for the Government must necessarily become the last heir of lands held in alienation from the State before the villages in which they were situated became the property of the present holders. In support of this argument, Colonel Etheridge quoted Article 8 of the Tasgaum Treaty that "if any of them (the holders) should die without heirs the Government would take possession of the vacant land."

In opposition to this doctrine, Mr. Captain Anderson observed that, in the first place, if the question was to be disposed of independently of treaty stipulations, it appeared to him that Colonel Etheridge was hardly justified in proposing that a stringent clause of one of the treaties should be applied to all the Southern Maratha States which were held under different engagements and tenures. He further revealed an interesting fact when he wrote that Colonel Etheridge would be surprised to learn that the pitch of the clause quoted by him from the Tasgaum Treaty, namely, "take possession of the vacant land," was not to be found in the Tasgaum engagement. The fact was, Mr. Anderson stated, that it was not entered in the English version of the treaty published in the Book of Treaties, but in an old copy of the same Tasgaum Treaty as found in the Political Agent's office, the words "take possession of vacant land" were scored out in pencil, and the words "and make arrangements" inserted. That this alteration was purposely made by someone having authority in the matter was evident, since there were other alterations in pencil which were found entered in the Maratha version of the treaty, wrote Captain Anderson, but these alterations were made in the original Maratha version but not entered in the English version published in the Book of Treaties.⁸¹ This rather strange error which might cost an Inamdar dearly, was glossed over by Mr. Anderson, when he wrote, "I can only conclude that the English version of

cepted as the final document on the dis-
'ersions of the treaties would be looked

these engagements in the Book of Treaties was copied from the original drafts before the alterations were made by Mr. Elphinstone.”

Even if all the “kudeem” Inams were liable to lapse to Government, said Mr. Anderson, on the death of the holder without a male issue (a point which was not satisfactorily established), he was still of opinion that in the absence of any treaty stipulations on the subject, the British Government had not the exclusive right of adjudicating in the matter, and subjecting the ‘kudeem’ Inams of Native States to a summary settlement which had been applied under different circumstances to certain classes of Inams in the Government territory. It would be unfair, after the lapse of upwards of a century, he wrote, “to originate an entirely new system by rigidly enforcing, for the sole benefit of the Government, arrangements applied under different circumstances, to Inam lands situated in British territory.” Any arrangement, therefore, in accordance with principles of justice or good policy, should not be permitted without the ruler of a State having a voice in such settlement.⁸² It was only as far back as 1856 when Government had resolved⁸³ that “it would be neither justice nor politic to enter into an enquiry as to the tenure on which the Pntwurdham chiefs hold the possession which they enjoyed before the introduction of British rule.” Such a wise policy the Government would do well to adopt, was the opinion of Captain Anderson.

Speaking of the Surinjamdars, we learn that they were inferior officers under the late Government, holding a stipulated revenue and of considerable power during the decline of the late Peshwa. The British “gave the chiefs to understand” during the struggle with the Peshwa that “they would be treated with favour and liberality,” provided they withheld their arms from the Peshwa’s cause. This promise was kept, for ‘not only were they not required to restore the usurped lands, but new surinjams were conferred on them.’

Now, when the “kudeem” Inams came to be settled, Captain Anderson wrote on their behalf that it would not be right to propose, nearly half a century later, to introduce without their concurrence a measure “with reference to all their subordinate ‘kudeem’ Inamdares which would, in various ways, materially affect their own interest and bear hardly on them.”

Such was the plea in defence of the privileged orders, who, in

⁸² Report No. 15 of 1864.

⁸³ Government Resolution of May 20, 1856

justice, deserved this humiliating treatment at the hands of the foreigners for the betrayal of the Peshwa. It was they who in the hour of their leader's trial, no matter how weak and incapable, betrayed their cause and sold their honour for ill-gotten gains, and received the Iscariot prize.

MIRASDARS

The wutum, or more commonly called the miras, was general throughout the whole of the conquered territory which stretched from the Krishna to the range of the ghauts that divided Gungtri from Khandesh. The institution of miras as a landed tenure eludes the grasp of history. Traces of it were often discovered in accounts of upwards of 150 years' standing. Waste of many years' standing frequently bore, on the British advent, the name of its former occupants, who were supposed to have been hereditary tenants.⁸⁴

The miras tenure was the most favoured of all landed tenures.⁸⁵ The mirasdar was respected the most in the village community. The mirasi was the most favoured of ryots, on whom Government exercised no control, and the collection of his revenue was never a difficulty, in so far that the miras gave such respectability to the ryot that he never thought of depriving the Sirkar of its just dues.

This privileged class of landholders had suffered much during the reign of the late Peshwa,⁸⁶ and with the British advent, in spite of all good wishes for their revival and maintenance, by the first two Commissioners,⁸⁷ the introduction of the new land settlement levelled down

⁸⁴ Chaplin's Report.

⁸⁵ "He is in no way inferior in point of tenure on its original basis... to the holder of the most undisputed free-hold estate in England. The ancestors of the present occupant of the lands of the Deccan were probably holders of land antecedent to the Mussalman conquest of their country on condition of paying a redendum equal to a sixth part of the produce of the land they held"—Captain Robertson, "Economic History of India" Dutt, p. 358.

⁸⁶ "Captain Brings seems to be of opinion that the meeras tenure has ceased to exist since the Mohammedan conquest in 1306. Ryots, however, who have long held land are on the footing of the Meerasdars, in as much as it is not customary to dispossess them of occupancy. Of old hereditary ryots compared with temporary tenants, the proportion may be 6 to 10"—Chaplin's Report of 1822, p. 43.

⁸⁷ "Were the assessment finally fixed on Government land, I would at once offer it on Cowle, upon the meeras tenure. By this measure confidence would be inspired in respect to permanency of possession, and the stock and labour of the people would be rapidly applied to render it productive. By the more general extension of meeras, or by allowing permanent occupancy to the Ooputtee, many evils, like a vagrant spirit on the part of the ryot, may be checked"—Chaplin's Report of 1822, p. 51.

the class distinction between the 'upri' (tenant-at-will) and the mirasdar, till the latter went the way of the ancient village communities⁸⁸

The miras *puttur* had carried with it a right to dispose of land by sale, gift, or mortgage, according to the usage of the Deccan. Even Baji Rao was said to have purchased miras land by paying a regular price⁸⁹. Captain Pottinger wrote, "However poor and needy he may be, the security of a mirasdar is much more readily accepted than that of the richest upri. If he has occasion to do so, he will be able to borrow money when the other would not obtain a rea." This is sufficient testimony to the social position enjoyed by a mirasi.

Mr. Chaplin observed that, with the commencement of British administration, the miras tenure began to dwindle. It was a lamentable fact that this ancient institution virtually ceased to exist before the first generation of British administrators had closed their labours in the Deccan. Their fixed resolve to make direct arrangement with every separate cultivator, and to impose upon him a tax that was revised at each recurring settlement, weakened and extinguished the mirasi tenure.

The introduction of the new survey settlement of 1838 conveyed to the occupant a better right on land than before, but it could not be completely exercised, so far as "the undefined nature of the miras tenure and the privilege of re-entering upon land⁹⁰ continued to be exercised." The exercise of such a right would prevent other occupants from acquiring a sufficiently secure title, and nothing would induce them to invest capital in the improvement of their lands. To meet this difficulty, the Government passed a Draft Act.

It was enacted, that all mirasdars not in occupation of their miras lands, at the introduction of the revenue settlement, would forfeit all titles to the re-occupation of such lands, unless they put forth a claim before the expiration of two years from the date of its notification.

Miras land which had been assigned to another for a term of years, was not to be taken back by the mirasdar on his appearance before the expiration of the term for which it was occupied, nor before the payment to the temporary occupant of all expenditure on account of works

⁸⁸ "Though much correspondence passed on the subject of the possession and rights of the mirasdars... all ryots have now equal rights as occupants under the survey tenure, one far more lasting and beneficial"---"Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, pp. 96, 97.

⁸⁹ Robertson's Report of Oct. 10, 1821.

⁹⁰ Preamble to the Draft Act, No. 3079, of May 3, 1852.

of irrigation and other permanent improvements for which he might not have been reimbursed by profits during his term of occupation.

In the case of disputes as to the amount to be paid by the mirasdar to the temporary occupant, it was left to be settled by a Committee of arbitrators.⁹¹ Finally, if at any future date the mirasdar abandoned his land or failed to pay the assessment he would forfeit his mirasi rights⁹²

This miras tenure was so highly prized by the Marathas that "the greatest Maratha commander, heir to a miras field, would sooner have lost wealth and rank than be dispossessed of such wutun or inheritance."⁹³ Such was the esteem in which it was held. In the last years of the late Government most of the mirasdars had fled owing to poverty. Under the new Government, its revival often meant litigation,⁹⁴ at the end of which the possession would hardly be worth anything, not even that old social position in a fast-dissolving society.

The efforts to revive the miras tenure often led to differences of opinion between the civil courts and the revenue authorities. According to the survey rules, a contract was established between the ryot and the Government for a term of thirty years and "yet, notwithstanding these important contracts," wrote one, M₁ Day in 1854, "the civil courts seem to possess the power, if they chose to exert it, of removing one of the contracting parties and substituting for him a person who may have been absent for any term less than thirty years."⁹⁵ Yet the Draft Act of 1852 had mentioned that, without the complete expiration of the term for which the land had been leased was finished, the holding could not be restored to the mirasdar. Hence the above statement of the superintendent comes as a surprise.

⁹¹ "Section III—One shall be appointed by each of the 2 parties, and 2 by the Collector, Sub-collector or Assistant Collector in charge of the District with permission to name an umpire, and that the decision of the majority of such a committee shall hold good, unless fraud or corruption on the part of the arbitrators be established, in the criminal or civil courts of the Zilla"

⁹² Draft Act No. 3079 of May 3, 1852

⁹³ Grant Duff quoted by Lieut H. I. Day in Letter No. 71 of Sept. 20, 1854

⁹⁴ Decisions of the Sudder No. 2403 of Feb. 19, 1849; Decision No. 2500 of Sept. 28, 1850. Claims put forth after 25 to 30 years

⁹⁵ "I am not expressing my opinion as to whether it is right that the meerasdar should be deprived of his privileges of ejection, and the tenure of all lands charged with Government assessment reduced to the same level, although it seems to me that these privileges, carried to their full extent, are not consistent with the interest of the cultivators generally"—Letter No. 71 of Sept. 20, 1854

In 1859⁹⁶ it appears that a Select Committee had been appointed to present a bill upon the miras tenure, limiting the period within which a mirasdar might assert his claim to lands which he had abandoned, or for which he might have failed to pay the assessment.

On calling for more detailed information, the committee was informed by the secretary to Government, that His-Lordship-in-Council was of the opinion, that there was no immediate necessity for legislation on the miras tenure, and, unless they saw any objection, the bill should be withdrawn.⁹⁷ The Secretary further wrote that the Governor fully agreed with his predecessors on "the impolicy of maintaining in its integrity a tenure obstructive to the progressive improvement of the country". This attitude made it clear that the miras tenure, like the village community, had served its purpose. A further perusal of this document reveals that the miras was valuable in former times because "all who were not mirasdars had no security of tenure," but the new survey, had "completely destroyed" all those distinctions, since all occupants had now an equal right to permanency of occupation, "so long as they discharge their rents."⁹⁸ Besides, the mirasdar possessed no special right that put him beyond "the application of ordinary revenue laws". On the contrary, the regular payment of the assessment was to be an essential factor in the maintenance of his mirasi rights.⁹⁹ His former privileges were now limited and checked, or they would "seriously affect the general welfare of the district" in which they prevailed. Such was the view taken of the rights of the revived mirasdars.

The miras under the new land settlement could, like any other land settlement, be put up for sale on default of the payment of assessment by the mirasdar. The mira-dar had the right to free himself from the liability for land by a timely notice to resign them, but such a deed of resignation was to include a formal resignation of all miras rights also.¹⁰⁰ All miras lands were then dispensed with under such

⁹⁶ "It meeras is still prized it is not so much for any substantial advantages, as for the station and honorary privileges in the village community which the tenure conferred"—Letter No 4420 of 1859

⁹⁹ "For it is admitted that Meeras lands, like all other, are liable to be sold in default of payment of revenue, and they are sold whenever the holder fails to pay the rent"—Hon'ble M Lumsden's Minute in S. D. A. Cases, Part IV, Vol II C

¹⁰⁰ "His-Lordship-in-Council proposes to treat on this principle lands now lying waste in the name of the absconded meersdars . . . the land will be put up to sale for the last six years' balances of revenue, and sold to the highest bidder or bought in on behalf of Government if the amount bid be less than the arrears due."

The question which created a difficult situation was the right of the former mirasdar to his land in occupation by others. Such claims, said the Governor-in-Council, would become more rare every year, and they should be left to take "their chance in the civil court." It was a matter for regret that the "Sudder Adawlut" admitted, thought His Lordship, the rights of these mirasdars which, according to him, were "a mere right of occupancy," which should have no more privileges than those enjoyed by holders of "proprietary rights in land." The Select Committee agreeing with the Governor-in-Council passed a resolution¹⁰¹ that no further consideration was desirable regarding the miras-tenure.

In 1860 we find some more regulations regarding this tenure—(1) When miras land was sold for balances of revenue, the miras right was sold too, but by the Regulations of 1851, if the sum bid was less than the amount of the balance due, the miras right was extinguished, not so when the sum bid was in excess of the balance due, in which case the miras was transferred to the purchaser.¹⁰² (2) If there were a number of sharers in a miras and if one of them desired to transfer his share to another person, he could do so without any difficulty. In the case of inheritance the same course was followed. (3) In the case of a miras land to be sold for balance due it was found that its liability was not "brought on the books as a demand." The difficulty was to be obviated by demanding a year's rent, whether the field was cultivated or not, and in the event of a refusal to pay, the land and the miras were to be sold.¹⁰³

The Resolutions and Acts that followed the new land settlement made the ancient rights of this privileged class of landholders a thing of the past. This interference here, as in these village communities tried to mould these time-honoured institutions upon bases little suited to the character and ways of the people. The new principles of land settlement sought to make Government the sole proprietor of all land. It was nothing but mental perversity which disregarded obvious facts, and persisted in claiming the state to be the landlord, and chose to dub the mirasdar as the tenant. By the destruction of the special privileges enjoyed by the mirasdar, he lost his economic stability and social posi-

¹⁰¹ Letter No. 104 of Dec. 24, 1859.

¹⁰² From this the Resolution concluded that meeras thus bought at an auction by a ryot "cannot claim the privilege of leaving his miras exempted from a similar process if he fails in his engagement in the same way"; the same held good for meeras land purchased by the order of the Civil Court

¹⁰³ Government Resolution No. 1047 of March 16, 1860.

tion, till the maintenance of a miras became an empty show, and was soon completely lost to view.

The destruction of the time-honoured village communities and the miras tenure had an unhappy effect on the future of the Deccan agriculturist. It was an unwise policy that sought to efface the indigenous institutions of a country, all the more so when it was an alien power which tried to raise a new fabric so completely divorced from the people, and presided over by a set of officials who little understood what was really good for the ruled. The present is ample testimony of the past. Though more than a hundred years have elapsed since the British conquest of the Deccan, our system of rural government has not been replaced with any other structure worthy of the past.

Such was the fabric created by the early land administrators. The chief architect of these early schemes, Sir George Wingate—in his memorandum from Crofton House, on the 2nd May, 1862, looked with satisfaction upon the results of his labour. His standard of success was that of every early administrator—the spread of tillage.¹⁰¹ “So remarkable and rapid a development of agricultural industry,” he wrote, “is almost unexampled in any part of the world, without aid from immigration.” One can hardly believe that a man of Sir Wingate’s ability could not surmise that such spread of tillage was an indication of the overburdened land industry. It was unemployment which spread cultivation over waste lands, and turned the erstwhile artisan and soldier into a debt-ridden farmer. The Southern Maratha Country and Khandesh, said Sir George, were producing great quantities of exportable products to meet the wants of the markets. May we ask which markets? Those of India or England? “They are raising the New Orleans variety of cotton and purchasing costly machinery for cleansing it from the seed.” Yes, for whose benefit may we ask? The answers are not far to seek. Every effort was made in these years to replace the loss of American colonies by India. The old colonial policy still predominated the British mind. The colonies were to supply the markets and materials for the British industries. Sir Wingate believed that his survey had brought a security of tenure, a moderation in Government demand, and facilities of transport, a conviction that we may respect,—yet the future had another story to tell.

¹⁰¹“The cultivation returns would show that a new domain of from two to three millions of acres has been added to the cultivated area under the operation of the field assessment, and that, in most of these districts, the whole of the waste, excepting soils of inferior quality, has already been brought under tillage”—Memorandum of May 2, 1862.

CHAPTER IV

BOMBAY DECCAN

(1836-1868)

WE NOW turn to the next thirty years of the economic history of the Bombay Deccan under the New Survey and Settlement which began in the Taluka of Indapur and gradually spread over all the Collectorates.

In submitting his report on the Indapur Taluka and its progress for the year 1837-38, Mr S Mansfield stated that an enormous increase in cultivation had taken place, and 66,941 acres had been freshly ploughed up; that the revenue could be realised with punctuality and ease; no outstanding balances remained and fewer remissions were required. These improvements are a proof of the prosperity and result of lowering the rates, wrote the Collector, for nothing like it had occurred in any other *zilla* in the Poona District, and it would not be as long as rent was not regulated by the price of grain¹.

This transitory prosperity came to naught in the succeeding season of 1838-39. The rain failed in some parts of the districts completely, and the rupee price of Indian millet fell at Indapur from 72 to 134 pounds. In the whole district the remission amounted to 24½ per cent.² It was in the November of 1838 that the Sub-Collectorate of Sholapur was separated from the Poona Collectorate. The remission of town duties and advances to build shops and repair wells improved Supa, Kalas, Mohol and the city of Poona.³

In 1839-40 the divisions of Bhimthadi and Pimpalgaon were revised. The people were little better off in those talukas than elsewhere.⁴ Though in 1840-41 a total sum of Rs 92,000 had to be remitted in Pabal, Purandhar, Junnar and Haveli, yet the report on the year was encour-

¹ Report No 101 of 1838, by Mr Mansfield, Collector-in-charge of Indapur.

² About 7½ per cent in the settled sub-division of Indapur, 43½ per cent in the unsettled sub-division of Junnar... and 22½ per cent in the unsettled division of Bhimthadi." - "Poona Gazetteer," p 417.

³ Letter of November 23, 1838 from Revenue Commissioner.

⁴ "Land Revenue of Bombay," A Rogers, p 112

aging.⁵ The Collector was of opinion, that the population had increased and remissions fallen; besides, the social and pecuniary condition of the people had perceptibly improved.⁶ In 1841, the Collector was given the full power of settling the rates of assessment, the survey officers were to be entrusted only with the classification of soils and other survey operations.⁷

During the introduction of the survey in Pabal and Haveli, it was found that though the condition of the people was better off than in other parts of the Deccan, an average of Rs 72,000 had been collected out of the dry crop assessment of Rs 1,55,000 during the last twelve years (1829-1841). In the first three years of British rule the collections had been very heavy, averaging Rs 1,60,000. "The early Collector had drained the country of its agricultural wealth and caused distress and poverty into which the rivot had been plunged."⁸

From 1841 to 1845, with the exception of the season of 1843, the period was anything but favourable. Both the seasonal crops of 1841-42 and 1842-43 were injured by insects and caterpillars.⁹ In 1841 it appeared that over-cultivation had resulted from the new survey rates and that the reduction in assessment produced a desire to secure land for cultivating¹⁰ beyond the rivot's means. The produce prices during 1841 to 1845 in Indapur were:¹¹

	1841-42	1842-43	1843-44	1844-45
Jawari	112	136	144	120
Bajri	80	31	88	72

With this decline in prices till 1844, there was a rise in the tillage area which rose from 917,810 acres in 1841 to 1,063,127 acres at the end of the 1844-45 season.¹² This increase in the cultivation would

⁵ Letter No. 1494 of May 16, 1842.

⁶ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 422.

⁷ "The measurement of the land may certainly be best undertaken by a body of scientific officers for the performance of that duty, and the classification of soils, be accomplished at the same time and safely entrusted to their hands. But the final and most important operation, the imposition of proper assessment, should in our opinion devolve and his assistants."—Extract from Letter No. 16 to Directors dated May 1, 1841.

⁸ "Land Revenue System of Bombay," A. Rogers, p.

⁹ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 424.

¹⁰ Report No. 2281 of 1841, (Collector of Poona)

¹¹ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 137.

¹² Ibid., pp. 425, 435.

naturally account for the great output, which lead to a fall in prices.¹³

In Indapur, the years 1841-45¹⁴ required continual remissions, and the promising commencement was not so hopeful in the years that followed, so much so that in 1843-44 there was a decrease even in the amount of land under cultivation. The revenue of 7 lacs in 1843 fell to 6 lacs in 1844 and the people of Indapur and Blumthadi were miserable.¹⁵

In an agricultural country like India, fodder is always an important commodity to the ryot. In 1844¹⁶ there was the question of the disposal of grass lands in the Poona Collectorate, which lead to the requesting of the opinions of the Revenue Commissioner and superintendents of the several revenue surveys.¹⁷

The opinions having being procured, the Government decided¹⁸ that care should be taken that no encroachments were made on the "village Gaeeran" (grass lands) which had been set aside by ancient usage, unless it be in quantity far beyond the wants of the population. No arable waste, besides this "Gaeeran," was to be given, since the reduction of rates had made it possible for the ryot to buy such arable waste by paying the assessment of such land, or purchasing it when it was put up for sale. His Excellency was of opinion, besides, that "the ryot has no more right to expect that Government is to provide him with free pasture than to demand that the land producing grain for the consumption of his cattle should be exempt from assessment." The best and most economical mode of providing fodder would be for the ryot to reserve a certain portion of his holding for the culture of grasses and fodder for his agricultural stock. It was finally laid down that first preference should always be given to the ryots of the village when the gaeeran was leased, or put up for sale, and in no

¹³ "The result of this was that the ryot was forced to bring to the market more produce to raise money to pay Government, so that the markets were glutted and prices so ruinously low" that the abundant crop "was a misfortune rather than an advantage"—Letter No 244 of December 15, 1849 (From G Wingate.)

¹⁴ Report No. 2214 of 1842 (From Collector to the Revenue Commissioner)
Report No 1881 of 1843 " " "
Report No 2179 of 1844. " " "

¹⁵ Report No 1491 of 1845. (From the Rev. Commr. to the Chief Secretary.)

¹⁶ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 439.

¹⁷ Letter No. 730 of June 3, 1844

¹⁷ Letter No. 2395 of July 25, 1844.

¹⁸ Resolution No. 3621 of November 16, 1844

case should strangers, and more particularly speculating contractors, be admitted to compete till the ryots were fully provided.

In 1845 a taxation on well-water was levied in Poona which became extremely unpopular. Mr. Wingate said that it was the tax rather than the mode of its collection that was unpopular; and more so, because it was a new imposition.¹⁹ But according to him, mere unpopularity to be considered as an unfitness of the impost, was tantamount to a condemnation of all change. Besides, Mr. Wingate could see no reason why a pauper who was unable to irrigate his land or pay the tax, should have more favour than any other revenue defaulter. Hence, if a ryot failed to pay the water charge, Government was entitled to bring his garden under the hammer, or to transfer it to any other holder who was willing to pay the arrears already due on it. This proposal, said Wingate, would alone save the garden cultivation from falling²⁰

During the revision settlement of Pabal, in 1844, we come across the "Vehir hoonda" system with which the ryots had been extremely dissatisfied. The "Vehir hoonda" system had been extended to the garden cultivation by which, if one, two or more shareholders made use of the water of a well or "pat" for the purpose of irrigation, the other shareholders who had not availed themselves of the water became liable for the amount, leivable from all

In Indapur and Bhimthadi, the "Vehir hoonda" amounted to Rs 916-9-0, and weighed heavily upon those ryots who, for want of means, left their lands unirrigated²¹ The Collector stated, that a good deal of hardship was experienced in consequence of the rule, that even a single sharer of many partners who availed himself of the well, was liable for the whole amount of tax imposed upon it. He found nothing on record so far, explanatory of the principle which regulated the impost of "Vehir hoonda." He agreed that it was unpopular because of the idea that it was a tax on the capabilities of a well and pressed heavily on the ryot's industry. The Commissioner, in his report²² awaiting Government sanction, ordered a full rental to be fixed on the entire well, but the tax was to admit of a portion of land being irrigated

¹⁹ Letter No 558 of October 9, 1845.

²⁰ So far, according to Mr. Wingate, not a single garden had been thrown out of cultivation since the new survey assessment, "nor even a complaint made," so far as he had heard

²¹ Report No. 2194 of 1844.

²² Letter No 602 of April 30, 1845

without imposing upon the sharers wishing to cultivate a responsibility more than they were capable of undertaking.

Mr. Nash, the superintendent of survey, said that the falling of garden cultivation in Bhimthadi was due to a combination among the well-holders not to pay the tax and an endeavour to have it repealed. The people of Indapur had, he said, foolishly carried into effect a similar threat formerly. "No notice was taken of it and the wells" were again brought into use. "I would strongly recommend the same plan," wrote the bureaucrat, "to be adopted toward the Bheemthurry well-holders, and I have no doubt the same result will ensue." Regarding the tax on the well, he was of opinion that if any water was used the whole assessment on the well should be paid.²³

The Government agreed with Lieutenant Nash's proposal, and strongly recommended its continuance. The "Vehir hoonda" system, as adopted in the surveyed Districts, was in their wisdom "the best and simplest mode of taxing Baghaet lands irrigated from wells."²⁴ But they requested the opinions of the Collectors and Superintendents of Survey to be called for.

In the letters²⁵ of the Collectors there was not a difference of opinion with regard to the difficulty of adopting the "Vehir hoonda" system. The Collector of Ahmednagar, besides pointing out the extreme unpopularity of the tax, said that it would lead to many quarrels among the ryots regarding their shares and respective uses of a well.

On 12th March, 1846, Government felt that the new survey assessment was moderate, and therefore an industrious and provident man ought to be able to meet his losses without Government assistance. The tax on the well-water was, in future, not to be collected from one person or shareholder, whether he used the well or not, but from all the shareholders of the well, whether they used the same jointly or separately.²⁶

From 1845 to 1850, the year 1845-46 was one of failure; the year 1847 turned out favourable, and the succeeding seasons were tolerably

²³ Letter No. 114 of April 17, 1845.

²⁴ Letter No. 4277 of September 3, 1845.

²⁵ Letter from Ahmednagar of November 29, 1845; Letter from Sholapur of November 8, 1846; Letter from Dharwar of December 9, 1845.

²⁶ "This would be in accordance with the practical application of the form under which the tax is paid on land, and the Governor-in-Council concurs in thinking it the most equitable and satisfactory method and accordingly authorises its adoption."—Letter No. 2705 of July 14, 1846.

favourable on the whole. Continuing the history of prices in Indapur we have:

	1845-46	1846-47	1847-48	1848-49	1849-50
Jawari	72	30	96	144	144
Bajri	50	26	64	112	113

In 1846-17 the tillage area stood at 1,148,755 acres, which was an increase over that of 1844-45; in 1847-48 the figures touched 1,228,304 acres, but dropped in the two succeeding years to 1,196,719 acres, yet the prices continued to fall (96 to 144 lbs the rupee). The revenue in 1845 was 6 laes, reaching 8 laes in 1846-47; yet in the next two years it fell to 7 laes again.

Turning to the history of Indapur from 1845 to 1850,²⁷ we learn that in 1845-46 the ryots, who had suffered severely from the failure of their crops, "in many successive seasons . . . were reduced to great poverty and distress, and some relief was considered indispensably requisite." After reading this extract in the seasonal report of 1845-46, there is no necessity to further criticise the success of the new survey. The years 1846 to 1848 were either a partial or complete failure, till in 1850, "the cultivators of the whole villages . . . were clamorous for remission in consequence of a great quantity of land being left uncultivated and unsown." Such was the revenue history of Indapur where Captain Wingate had introduced his new land settlement twelve years before.

Between 1841 and 1850, Purandhar, Pabal, Haveli, Supa, and Baramati were surveyed and assessed according to the new settlement. We may now take a brief survey²⁸ of the taluka of Baramati as a typical example of the condition prevalent in the Collectorate.

The town of Baramati possessed a market in which every kind of produce met with ready sale. The town was at a distance of fifty-eight miles south-east of Poona, and six or seven miles away from the river

²⁷ Report No. 2468 of 1846, (from the Collector of Poona to the Rev. mmr.)

Report No. 2682 of 1847, (from the Collector of Poona to the Rev. mmr.)

Report No. 2765 of 1848, (from the Collector of Poona to the Rev. mmr.)

Report No. 3912 of 1849, (from the Collector of Poona to the Rev. mmr.)

Report No. 18 of 1850, (from the Collector of Poona to the Rev. Commr.).

²⁸ Report No. 63 of August 5, 1846, (from Mr. W. E. Evans, Asst. Supt. Revenue Survey and Assessment).

BOMBAY DECCAN

Nira. The country was a black plain which produced magnificent crops of the finest species of jawari in the Deccan. This type of jawari was also grown in Supa, Indapur and Kurkaumb. The straw for fodder in Baramati was so nutritive that horses fed on it would thrive and work with little or no grain, and the bullocks without oil cakes. Along the banks of the river Karoo, which ran through Baramati, could be seen large tracts of irrigated lands making a most pleasing sight in the month of February, when acres upon acres of standing corn waved in the breeze.

Like Indapur, Supa and Kurkaumb, the staple produce of Baramati was jawari and bajri, perhaps four-fifths of the former and one-fifth of the latter were usually sown. Comparing the climate of Baramati with Supa, it could be seen that Baramati enjoyed a similar quantity of rain to that of Supa, Indapur and Kurkaumb, whilst its proximity to Poona, the greatest grain mart in the country, gave it an added advantage over Indapur.

Referring to the average prices²⁹ of bajri and jawari, the Superintendent urged the adoption of one uniform measure of weight throughout the Poona Zilla, for the seer varied in almost every village or town, paving a way for the ready means of imposition by the seller, and affording a fruitful source of contention between the latter and his customers.

Means of transport, especially in the case of bulky articles like grain, either enhanced or diminished the value of the produce. A new road, it appears, was under construction between Poona and Sholapur, but this new communication was likely to be more helpful to Indapur and Kurkaumb than Baramati. The superintendent suggested the construction of a branch road from Yewut, a distance of 26½ miles from Poona, through Bhor to Supa, 11 miles, and from thence to Baramati, a distance of 18 miles. "The boon to Baramuttee," wrote Mr. Evans, "of a good road through Bhor would be a great one."

It was finally suggested by Mr. Evans that though moderate, just, and equal taxation would better the condition of the people, it was not all, and would hardly of itself induce habits of reflection and foresight, so requisite to counteract "the withering influence of a degrading superstition detrimentally interwoven with each action" of the every-day life of a ryot. This evil superstition could only be removed

by teaching the people to act on broader principles and "through the means of enlightening their minds." This enlightenment was to be spread, by the plan of fostering the indigenous schools and their teachers. The spread of education would enable the ryot to take an interest in the land, by understanding the principles on which his land settlement was made, the records prepared, and above all to see if the entries regarding himself were correct. Further, the means of instruction already existed, though rude and elementary; yet its methods might be changed and the instruction improved. All that they should do, wrote the Superintendent, was to support the people in their endeavour to run such institutions, and aid their efforts. There was no necessity for the establishment of Government schools in Baramati as was done at Purandhar, and Mr. Evans hoped that "before long the village school-master may be a recognised servant of the community as any other servant, whose remuneration is now borne amongst the authorised village charges"³⁰. Such were the unfulfilled hopes of our early administrators, which remained only as pious wishes. Rural upliftment, village education, the happiness of the greatest number in India are achievements that can only be accomplished by devotion of a high order, by service that seeks no reward and by sacrifice that knows no limit. Such devotion, service, and sacrifice can only be given by the nation itself toward its upliftment. No Government, much less a foreign, can fulfil so onerous a task.

When the report on Baramati was forwarded to Government, the Commissioner strongly recommended the necessity of a good road to Baramati, to branch off from Supa by the Poona Sholapur Road then under construction³¹. The proximity to Poona, which this new means of transport would give, would regulate the prices of produce in the surrounding districts, and confer on the people the boon of an increased value for their produce³². The Government, besides sanctioning

³⁰ The above Report was forwarded with a letter (No 183) of August 21, 1846, to Mr. Elphinstone, Collector of Poona, who wrote the following regarding schools: "In Mr. Evans' paras 23rd, 24th and 25th, it will be seen that Mr. Evans views every attempt to improve the condition of the people without education, incomplete and defective....Mr. Evans, in recommending assistance to be given to indigenous schools of the country, .appears to advocate a very useful course. The importance of assisting the indigenous schools of the country, however, should not withdraw our attention from the importance of excellent Government schools now established in most of the large towns. Under the most extended plan of assisting indigenous schools, these superior schools would still be necessary."

³¹ Letter No 245 of February 5, 1847

³² Letter of October 23, 1846

the new rates for Baramati, consented to refer the suggestion on roads to the consideration of the General Department.³³

Two years later in 1849, the Revenue Commissioner, writing³⁴ to Government, recalled its intention of constructing a good road to Baramati. He wrote that Government had of late years lessened its demand of revenue "to meet the depressed state of agriculture and growing poverty of the inhabitants of the Dekhan," but unless agriculture and commerce were not relieved of depression by the construction of numerous good roads, the country would soon find it as difficult to pay even the reduced assessment as it formerly did the old. I might remind the reader that the above extract from the pen of a Commissioner is a testimony to the progressive deterioration of the condition of our ryots even fourteen years after the introduction of the New Land Settlement.

The period between 1850 and 1855, with the exception of the year 1852-53, was one of general failure. The progress of the district was far from satisfactory. The prices in Indapur showed a continual rise and fall.³⁵

	1850-51	1851-52	1853-54	1854-55
Jawari	76	80	112	58
Bajri	68	84	80	52

The tillage area and collections in 1850-51 were 1,215,015 acres and Rs.7,30,320, in 1851-52 there was a rise in the revenue which reached the figure of Rs.8,04,620, but during 1852-53 and 1853-54 the revenue fell by Rs.79,860; in 1854-55 it again reached Rs.8,14,860, thus clearing a margin of Rs.90,100 over the revenue of 1853-54 (Rs.7,24,760); this rise, made by the deficit of Rs.79,860 of the previous years, left the Government a balance of Rs.10,240 to her credit at the end of the five years (1850-55).³⁶ These calculations reveal no revenue loss to Government, while the administration of the last eighteen years may be thus summed up:

"The eighteen years ending 1854 was a period of little improvement. In Indapur and Bhimthadi the people were few and poor. Over

³³ Letter No. 3865 of October 4, 1847

³⁴ Letter No. 3758 of October 2, 1849

³⁵ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 113.

³⁶ Revenue Collections were: Rs7,30,320 (1850-51); Rs8,04,620 (1851-52); Rs8,00,720 (1852-53); Rs7,24,760 (1853-54), Rs8,14,860 (1854-55); "Poona Gazetteer," pp. 450 to 465.

almost the whole of the district about half of the eighteen years, 1838, 1840, 1841, 1844, 1845, 1850, 1851 and 1853, were bad seasons; and, except when its price was raised by a general failure of crop, grain was ruinously cheap, the rupee price of Indian millet varying from 30 to 141, and averaging 104 pounds. In spite of these obstacles, the tillage area rose from 895,438 acres in 882 villages in 1839-40 to 1,368,130 acres in 941 villages in 1853-54, and the collections from Rs.6,36,120 in 1837-38 to Rs.7,24,760 in 1853-54.³⁷

Turning to the question of wages³⁸ in Poona District, the labourers hired for a year were usually paid Rs.10 or 12 and allowed $\frac{1}{4}$ maund of unbaked rice each month amounting to 15 maunds for the year, or in money about Rs.9-8-0. It was usual to give them 3 annas for their yearly consumption of salt, and the clothing cost between Rs.2-8-0 and Rs.3-3-0 per annum. Such little assistances as shaving the beard and head, the former monthly, the latter bi-monthly, cost 4 annas per annum. A labourer, hired for a month, received Rs.2 with food. The hire of a labourer for a year cost the total amount of Rs.24 or 25, including board and clothing, and at that rate, "it would appear possible to support life," wrote Lieutenant Davy, "at the incredibly small sum of Rs.13 or Rs.11 per annum per each individual."³⁹ Out of this miserable pittance, he said, the labourer had to pay one twenty-sixth or one twenty-eighth share for salt, which formerly could be obtained at 2 annas per annum. This was, therefore, a heavy tax "small as it may appear, until compared with the circumstances of those who pay."

The labourers had a system of letting themselves out on hire for a term of 6, 8 or 10 years at the rate of Rs.5 per annum. When a man was anxious to settle himself in life and marry, he would let himself out for a number of years' purchase, he let himself for 10 years for a

³⁷ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 464.

³⁸ Average Monthly Rates of Wages at Poona

Class of Workers	Average for		1852
	1798-1820	Rs. As.Ps	
Carpenters	15- 0- 0		15- 0- 0
Bricklayers	15- 0- 0		15- 0- 0
Assistant Servants to the Above	5-10- 0		3- 8- 0
Female Servant	3- 8- 0		2-12- 0
Tailor	15- 0- 0		15- 0- 0
Sawyer	15- 0- 0		16- 0- 0

"Indian Journal of Economics," Vol. xiv (1933-34), p. 344.

See also my "Letters on Economic Conditions (1818-1826)"

³⁹ Letter dated August 1. (It had no year, but was found in the file of documents ranging between 1853 to 1857.)

sum of Rs.50, 8 years for Rs.40, and besides, he gave a personal security for the fulfilment of his obligation if unable himself to perform it. This system was a remnant of slavery. That the system continued on a larger scale under the British appears to be evident from what Lieutenant Day wrote, "But instances of sale in human beings have long ceased to be numbered among the evils continuing under the sanction of the British Government; nor does it appear that even under the Peshwa's rule the evil necessarily attendant upon so odious a system ever attained a height of cruelty and heartless oppression which now affix the stamp of reprobation upon one of the otherwise most forward of the nations of the world."

In 1858, an inquiry regarding the assessment of "Vargees," or cultivated patches of ground adjoining houses, and situated within bounds of village sites, was set afoot by the Revenue Commissioner. The Superintendent of Survey was to bear in mind the following three points when sending his reply—(1) Whether such lands were measured, assessed, and numbered by the Survey Department, (2) Whether such lands were assessed previous to the survey, and (3) Whether the assessment on each land was fixed or varied every year according to the measurement of the extent of cultivation.⁴⁰

Captain Francis said that in the Desh villages of the Poona District, at the time of the settlement, the ryots were given free of rent the use of all "Vargees" under a quarter of an acre in extent. All other "Vargees" above that area were assessed according to the rates of the village, and entered under a separate head at the foot of the regular survey numbers.

In the mawuls ten or fifteen *goontas* had in some cases been exempted from assessment, as well as numbers of less than ten. It appeared that the ryots were found to sow these patches with grain, whereon the mamlutdars were informed to warn the ryots that an assessment would be levied if their "Vargees" were used for such a purpose, *net so*, if the spot was used as a stack-yard, or for the growth of vegetables.⁴¹

Similar steps regarding the "Vargees" were taken in the Southern Maratha Country and Ahmednagar. All "Vargees" of half an acre in the Southern Maratha Country were to be provisionally measured, and

⁴⁰ Letter No. 955 of April 13, 1858

⁴¹ Letter No. 793 of July 16, 1858

the assessment was to be fixed at the time of the settlement; those in excess of half an acre were assessed without reference to previous assessment, unless they appeared in the accounts as Inam.

Slight modification in the above rules of measurement were introduced, when all "Vargees" on the outskirts of the village were over one quarter of an acre and all above half an acre, if situated within the village among the houses; if irrigated, all above one quarter of an acre were to be measured wherever situated.⁴² In Ahmednagar, all such small patches not exceeding half an acre in extent and immediately surrounding a house within the precincts of a village, were not taxed.⁴³

The use of these holdings, or "small enclosure around dwelling houses in villages used by ryot generally," were "for the purpose of stacking grain, fodder, fuel," and were "occasionally cultivated also with vegetables and corn." The reader may now consider the hardly profitable purpose to which the ryots put these meagre holdings. The assessment on the same "would not exceed 4 annas" in some cases. In one place a ryot was called upon to pay an assessment of "some small fraction of an anna" which was an assessment on "one goonta or the fortieth part of an acre"⁴⁴ Mr. Inverity wrote, that "this inquisitive interference and demoralization thus annually occasioned would be intolerable to any but a native of the country."⁴⁵

The Government resolved,⁴⁶ that "Vargee" or *Purdia* lands surrounding houses situated in towns or villages, were to be exempt from assessment when they did not exceed a quarter of an acre. Anderson remarked that the expense of measuring such small plots would add materially to the cost of the survey; besides, a quarter of an acre was only 35 yards square, which was a small space to limit untaxed house enclosure, considering the house, the shed for cattle, and frequently the ricks that had to stand within that enclosure⁴⁷

These "Vargees" were not subjected "to any assessment under the former Government."⁴⁸ The Collector of Ratnagiri also bore a testi-

⁴² Letter No. 158 of April 30, 1858.

⁴³ Letter No. 793 of July 16, 1858

⁴⁴ "The whole revenue derived from purdee lands in the Mawul taluka last year amounted to Rs36-10-3, not nearly sufficient to pay the expenses of measurement and assessment where the individual acres are small and the villages numerous."—Letter No. 1175 of May 6, 1858.

⁴⁵ Letter No. 1175 of May 6, 1858.

⁴⁶ Government Resolution of May 6, 1858.

⁴⁷ Letter No. 266 of July 27, 1858.

⁴⁸ Letter No. 793 of July 16, 1858.

mony "that it appears from the village "*pankurdas*" (survey reports) in the time of the Peshwa's Government that these small enclosures were exempt from rent, and up to the present time they have continued so."⁴⁹ This opinion was supported by the Collectors of Belgaum and Sholapur.⁵⁰ These opinions accompanied Mr Inverity's suggestion "that any investigation into these small holdings... is totally uncalled for and would be in the last degree unpopular"⁵¹ Government resolved that the occupation of *Purda* lands within the village sites, whatever their extent, were in no instance to be interfered with.⁵²

We may now turn our attention to the remaining thirteen years (1855-68) and mark the progress in cultivation and revenue during that period⁵³

Years	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees	Rentissions in Rupees
1855-56	1,447,006	8,54,290	-
1856-57	1,534,473	8,79,280	--
1857-58	1,566,231	9,19,190	
1858-59	1,598,885	9,33,050	-
1859-60	1,654,399	9,56,630	-
1860-61	1,604,802	9,66,180	-
1861-62	1,691,352	9,99,330	4
1862-63	1,696,097	9,96,990	120
1863-64	1,720,335	9,88,790	1,470
1864-65	1,736,582	10,06,410	320
1865-66	1,743,390	10,55,210	130
1866-67	1,784,390	9,37,300	80,040
1867-68	1,803,708	11,16,090	44,320

Looking at the tillage area, there was an unbroken rise throughout the thirteen years under review. This continued rise in cultivation was an indication of the rising burden on land, but it must not be forgotten that this rise in tillage may have been also effected by the reverting to Government of alienated villages by the death of the incumbents, leaving no heirs, or by other means and regulations.

The revenue collection shows a continued rise till 1861-62, followed by a fall in the next two succeeding years by a total sum of Rs.12,880. The rise of the revenue to 10 lacs in 1864-65 and 1865-66 wipes out the deficit and gives Rs.13,000 more. Though the revenue falls to 9 lacs in 1866-67 ample amends are made by the rise of the collections to 11 lacs and 12 lacs in the years 1867-68 and 1868-69.

⁴⁹ Letter No. 945 of July 29, 1858.

⁵⁰ Letter No. 578 of July 30, 1858; Letter No. 305 of August 12, 1858

⁵¹ Letter No. 2141 of August 16, 1858

⁵² Resolution No. 3330 of October 11, 1858

⁵³ "Poona Gazetteer," pp 468-499, 475.

Let us now look at the prices in Indapur for the thirteen years 1855 to 1868.⁵⁴

Years	Jawari in Pounds	Bapi in Pounds
1855-56	64	58
1856-57	64	56
1857-58	78	74
1858-59	64	36
1859-60	78	62
1860-61	66	46
1861-62	54	38
1862-63	32	32
1863-64	26	24
1864-65	32	28
1865-66	36	30
1866-67	-	-
1867-68	-	-

Since 1852-53 the prices had reached a certain stability. In 1855-56 they had risen to 64 lbs. the rupee. They remained, with slight fluctuations, the same till 1862-63, when they rose to 32 lbs., "and continued about thirty-two pounds till 1867."

The American war in the sixties of the last century gave an impetus to Indian cotton, and for a time the riot showed signs of prosperity. These signs of prosperity led Government to enhance its revenue demands at the second revision settlement of 1868. By 1875 the Deccan riots brought home the true conditions of the peasants, and the failure of the New Land Settlement⁵⁵

SHOLAPUR

(1838-1868)

The fortunes of Sholapur throughout the years 1838 to 1868 were closely interwoven with those of Poona and Ahmednagar. The talukas which composed Sholapur underwent a transference from one main division like Poona to another like Ahmednagar during the years 1818 to 1869;⁵⁶ even its revenue history up to the new survey settlement in 1839-40 differed little from that of Poona and Ahmednagar. In

⁵⁴ "Poona Gazetteer," p. 137

⁵⁵ "One of the main reasons of the Deccan riot in the seventies of the last century was found in immense increase in revenue based on cotton prices obtained during the American Civil War. But it requires a riot of this magnitude to make Government realise that the enhancement was hastily sanctioned."—"Bombay Land Revenue System," D. R. Gadgil, p. 29.

⁵⁶ "Before 1869 when the present (1884) District of Sholapur was formed, its sub-divisions were frequently transferred from one District to another."—"Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 303

spite of these uncertain conditions of the talukas as regards their place in the Collectorates, we find that in 1838 the sub-division of Sholapur, Barsi, Mohol, Madha, Kurmallia, Indi, Hippargi, and Muddebihal formed a Collectorate styled Sholapur, and continued till 1864.

The condition of this sub-collectorate prior to 1838 has already been traced. Since 1825 low prices, ranging between 104 lbs. to 26 lbs. had set in, accompanied by heavy assessment, and large remissions. Such a general poverty was the consequence of the exaction of excessive rent, and when it was remembered that every increase of rent must lead to a reduction of a rate of profit which was perhaps the sole inducement to employ capital in productive industry, we have not far to seek the reason for prematurely checking the further progress of society at its earliest stages toward improvement.

In 1810-11, the new survey settlement was introduced into Sholapur. Sholapur was a considerably thriving town with a population of 21,000 souls. It was the only market for the surplus produce of the surrounding villages. In 1833 the import duty amounted to Rs 13,540. Large quantities of ginger, garlic, sal-flower, beetle, and other valuable products were brought from the Nizam's villages to the mart at Sholapur. Sholapur was, besides, a centre of salt and beetle-nut trade between the Ratnagiri coast and the inland tract, and also for coarse cotton cloth and ropes for the surrounding villages. The next to be surveyed was Barsi, a flourishing and important centre of trade prior to the British advent. It was reduced to ruin by the extortion of an excessive assessment, accompanied by the falling price of grain. The next two to be settled were Ropala and Kurmallia in 1844, and in July of the same year, the survey progressed to the Canarese talukas⁵⁷ of the Collectorate.

The Canarese District formerly consisted of one immense pergumna, afterwards divided into two, subsequently into three, and finally arranged with certain lapsed and exchanged villages into four pergunnas. The Canarese villages covered a very large tract of the country containing 16,00,000 acres, an extent of country equal within 4 lacs of acres to the area of the Poona Collectorate. The country was a prom-

⁵⁷ "Captain Landon was placed in the Mungolee Talooka. Captain Strather was continued in the Churchun Petha of the Indee District. Lieutenant Evans was placed in the Soubeh Petha of the Moodabehal Talooka. Captain Boye was placed in the Bageewarree and Neergoondie villages lately obtained by Government. Mr. Price was placed in the Toondgee Petha of Moodeebahal Talooka. Mr. Bell was placed in the Hypurga Talooka."—Report No. 194 of July 24, 1844.

ising one, containing many fertile lands and growing largely cotton, and there was little doubt that with care and liberality on the part of Government, it would become a rich and prosperous country. The Superintendent suggested that the objectionable practice of compelling the ryots of these districts, accompanied by proof of having a certain number of bullocks, to proceed by petition to obtain fresh lands for cultivation, should be abolished. Besides, it necessitated a disagreeable and provoking scrutiny into the private affairs of the ryots, and encouraged chicanery and bribery among the revenue officials.⁵⁸

Indi was the largest⁵⁹ taluka in the Canarese division of the Collectorate. The country was entirely composed of undulating plains with not a single hill within its boundaries. There was also a dearth of large timber trees, the waste lands being covered with stunted bushes which were cut down for fuel and hedging. No river traversed through the taluka. The only one that had any connection with it was the Bhima. The soil was tolerably fertile.⁶⁰

The population was more limited than in those of the talukas north of the Bhima. It was observed that in the former unsettled times the country was almost entirely depopulated. The census taken by the mamluddar in Fusly 1250 gave the population in the Souba Division as 3,391 souls, in Ahinlla as 3,568, and Churchun as 2,917 making a total population of 50,496 souls.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Report No. 194 of July 24, 1844.

⁵⁹ "The superficial extent of the whole talooka, inclusive of the Jagheer and Surunjam villages according to the survey made in Fusly 1235 is about 6,13,074 acres or 958 square miles nearly. Exclusive of Jagheer and Surunjam villages the extent is 5,06,968 acres or 792 square miles. This is the largest talooka within the Sholapur Zilla."

"The Souba or Indee Division of the talooka contains 46 villages, Ahinlla 56, and Churchun 30, in all 132 Government villages which with 30 alienated ones give 165 as the total number". Report of September 28, 1842 (from Mr W H Bell).

⁶⁰ Report of September 28, 1842.

⁶¹

TABLE OF POPULATION

Designation	Men	Women	Children	Total
Souba Division				
Cultivators and their families	3,009	3,082	3,132	9,253
Bullockdars and others who pay the Mooturfa	1,715	1,684	1,434	4,835
Miscellaneous	1,306	1,440	1,145	3,891

(Continued on next page)

The people were sunk in greater poverty than those of the northern districts. The system of assessment that had so long prevailed had drained the people of their wealth, and must have produced "incalculable mischief upon their moral character, especially on that of a people, such as those of these districts are, notorious from former times for their predatory habits." The Canarese, Hindustani, and Maratha languages were spoken, but while the first was the most prevalent, it was written by only a few people, hence the Maratha language was more widely used.

Education here, as elsewhere, was in the background. Among a population of about half a lac, the only Government school was in Indi. There were about thirty private schools "not deserving the name" and scantily attended.

The staple produce of the district was chiefly bajri and jowari. Wheat, gram, dal and kurdee were found to some extent, especially the last, which was also utilised for the purpose of oil extraction. Sugar and cotton cultivation were more limited, especially the former, while the cotton was of an inferior quality. Negligence in cultivation was not due so much to the infertility of the soil as to the indolence, poverty and apathy of the people. "This is almost a general picture," wrote Mr Bell, "of all the agricultural districts of the Deccan, but in my opinion particularly so of this."

Weekly markets were held at Indi, Tanba, Naglan, Ahinlla, Morutgee, Mulzhan and others. Besides these, there was a good market at Shindgee, an alienated village, advantageously situated toward the south end of Ahinlla petha. To these markets bania and others went from distant places. The merchants often employed the village bania as an agent to collect for them what they wanted. Sometimes the ryots themselves took their grain to the markets, but more often the harvest was sold to the village bania who stored up the grain in his granary. A good supply of country cloth was found in these mar-

	Ahinlla Division			
Cultivators and their families	2,794	2,893	2,627	8,494
Bullockdars and others who pay the Mooturia	1,621	1,592	1,439	4,652
Miscellaneous	1,239	1,262	1,007	3,568
	Churchun Division			
Cultivators and their families	3,479	3,086	2,707	9,372
Bullockdars and others who pay the Mooturia	1,049	1,454	1,011	3,514
Miscellaneous	895	977	1,045	2,917

kets which, in consequence of the general cheapness of subsistence, was cheaper in Indi than in places near Poona. The number of persons occupied in trade was limited. Grain was exported by the Burjaries on pack bullocks for exchange of salt. Cotton was chiefly taken by the "Wanees" to Sholapur, and often also by the cultivator, leaving a good supply behind for home manufactures. The oil extracted from "kurdee" was an important article of commerce, and was exported to Meritch and southwards in large quantities. The English manufactures had a limited sale both in Indi and Ahimla.⁶²

The chief causes for the depreciation of prices of produce, were the want of roads and a more commercial mode of carrying the produce to the market. Sholapur was the most favourable mart. As circumstances stood, the Government could not undertake at once to make roads throughout the country. It was therefore suggested that the mahars of each village should be made to keep in order every road that ran from their village to the surrounding ones up to the extent of their boundary. If this were done, the roads would be quite passable during the dry season. The next proposal was that Government should make carts and induce the people to buy them. The roads having been improved and carts introduced into general use, accompanied by the new land settlement, would considerably improve the resources of the country.⁶³ Besides the improvement of these physical conditions, there still remained the moral ones, wrote the Superintendent, which had to be improved, for so long as the ryot continued the votary "of a degrading superstition," which was opposed to the formation of a good character, "so long will they remain low."

⁶² The above Report was forwarded by Lieutenant Nash with Letter No 215 of September 26, 1843. He wrote "There are many flourishing Sowars, oilmen, dyers and weavers in these districts, and in some places their houses shew an expenditure in their construction not common in the Deccan. On the whole I do not think the districts are in a retrograde state. A great deal of indolence and apathy imputed to the people is to be ascribed to the revenue system which affords no security to property.

"Cotton and Kurdee are cultivated extensively .

"I beg to add my testimony to the deficiency of the means of education. There is hardly a karkoon in our cutcheries who can read fluently what has been written in the Canarese language by another person."

⁶³ The introduction of the carts would do away with the use of pack-bullocks and thus relieve the animals to do work in the field while only a few of them would do the work of carriage. This would improve the cultivation of the fields and relieve the ryot from the thralldom of the village bania, wrote Mr. Bell. Report of September 28, 1842

The three remaining talukas of Muddebihal, Hippargi and Mongoli were settled about 1844. Muddebihal⁶³ was situated on one of the rockiest and most barren parts of the belt; yet in its two varieties of soil,—black and light red, near the Krishna,—grew the finest crops. The Kumbis, though poor and depressed, were known throughout India for their cotton spinning. The staple crops were jawari and bajri.⁶⁴ At the time of the survey, Mr. Price said that, after much attention and careful enquiry, he had come to the conclusion that the rvots were in easier circumstances than those of Indapur or Kurmalli. In spite of the last three bad seasons, the farmers were free from debt, and had laid aside some grain for emergency.⁶⁵ The town of Hippargi was twenty-six miles south of Indi. Like Indi, except around the villages and in garden lands, the country was bare of trees. From the north-west to the south-east the taluka was traversed by the Don. In spite of the saltiness of its waters, the rich black soil of the Don valley, even in years of scanty rainfall, yielded splendid crops.⁶⁶ The fifty-seven Government villages had an area of about 273,555 acres and a population of 32,024 souls, or about seventy-four to the square mile. Cotton was grown in considerable quantities; bajri among the early crops and jawari both in early and late harvests were the chief grains and staple food of the people. Markets were held at Hippargi, Korvad, Sivangi and Golgeri, the last of which was the best. From these markets goods left for Bijapur, Surpur, Talikote, Sholapur, Athni and Mahalingpur. Little grain left the district: cotton and cotton-twist, after some had been kept for home use, were chiefly sent to Sholapur, Kokatnur, Hippargi, Jalvad and Golgeri, where they were manufactured into cotton cloth and blankets. During the six years ending 1842, the rupee price of millet (bajri) had risen from 159 lbs. in 1837 to 144 lbs. in 1842. Mangoli lay a few miles south-east of Bijapur, and was bounded on the west by Sattara. The land was undulating and was drained by the river Don. Salt was made by evaporating the Don water in cement-lined pans. In 1840 Don salt was taxed 8 annas the maund. The returns showed 1,680 land holders of whom 461 were proprietors, 78 mirasdars, 1,007 upris and 134 "Vovandkaris."

⁶³ "Since 1818 it had constantly suffered from cholera, and the famine of 1833 had permanently reduced the strength of the population. According to 1824 survey the whole arable area was 191,408 acres of which 143,108 were Government arable, and 48,390 were Inams. The area was divided into 94 Government villages."—Report of August 24, 1844.

⁶⁴ Report of August 24, 1844.

⁶⁵ Report of September 18, 1844.

⁶⁶ Report of September 24, 1844 (By Mr. W H Bell)

(strangers). The early crops were of little consequence and the late harvest gave jawari, the staple food of the people. Cotton was also largely grown. It was bought by the Sholapur merchants to make cotton yarn, most of which was sent to Sattara.⁶⁷ These Canarese talukas were later to be formed into the separate Collectorate of Bijapur. Bijapur, during our period of history (1818-1868) was itself only one of the talukas of the Sattara Collectorate.

These reports on the survey of the talukas were well received by the Government and the rates proposed were sanctioned.⁶⁸

Lieutenant Nash, in introducing the new survey in Poona and Sholapur, had followed Mr Pringle's plan of survey rather than that laid down by Captain Davidson.⁶⁹ The system of survey introduced by Mr. Pringle, he wrote, was prepared with the utmost ability and talent, and though actual experience had shown that there was a good deal to be changed and improved, yet was of opinion, that there were many things worth adhering to in the old Deccan Survey. His next proposal was that complete uniformity of system was not desirable, and that some latitude must always be given to the discretion of the assessing officer. This system of inelasticity in the land revenue was a grave defect of the New Settlement. A burden once levied at the revision settlement could not be lightened for thirty years, and the only way in which the ryot could escape was by relinquishing the land.⁷⁰ The ephemeral prosperity of the ryot, showing a marked amelioration in their condition by the moderation in assessment which the new land settlement introduced, won for Captain Wingate and Lieutenant Nash the gratification of the Court of Directors.⁷¹

Information regarding the area under cultivation and the revenue collection for the period became a difficult matter to procure; all that could be gathered were the figures for the years 1864 to 1868.⁷²

Years	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees
1864-65	1,731,009	7,70,345	5
1865-66	1,738,514	7,69,136	5
1866-67	1,794,031	7,85,750	130
1867-68	1,795,142	7,83,580	170

⁶⁷ Report of September 24, 1844 (By Captain Landon.)

⁶⁸ Letter No. 4031 of November 19, 1844.

⁶⁹ Letter No. 85 of April 11, 1845.

⁷⁰ "Bombay Land Revenue System," D. R. Gadgil, p. 30.

⁷¹ Despatch No. 5 of Feb. 18, 1846 (Found with Letter No. 2134 of 1846.)

⁷² "Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 361.

With the list of prices (of Indian millet) we are more fortunate and have a record from 1836-1868. This history of prices may be divided into three distinct periods.⁷³

Years	1st Period	Indian Millet
1838		62
1839		114
1840		110
1841		138
1842		172
1843		188
1844		124
1845		55
1846		51
	2nd Period ⁷⁴	
1855		165
1856		88
1857		116
1858		104
1859		98
1860		88
1861		78
1862		58
	3rd Period	
1863		45
1864		29
1865		29
1866		38
1867		37
1868		47

A glance at the prices during the 1st period (1838-46) is enough to show us the ruinous level to which they sank from 1839, when they stood at 114 lbs. a rupee to 188 lbs. by 1843. With a rise in 1846 to 51 lbs. they again fell at the opening of the 2nd period to the ruinous level of 165 lbs. the rupee in 1855. From 165 lbs. which was the lowest for the years 1855 to 1862, we mark a rise from 1859, when the prices stood at 98 lbs. to 58 lbs. the rupee in 1862. The rise is continued in the 3rd period opening with 45 lbs., till in 1867 the prices rose to 37 lbs. the rupee.

With such fluctuations in prices the conditions of the ryot could hardly have improved after the new assessment. From 1839 to 1859, a span of twenty years, the prices showed such a ruinous fall that for eight out of the incomplete twenty years, the prices stood below 100 lbs. the rupee. It was only from 1860 that the prices took a turn for the better, and this was due to the appreciable change in the economic condition of the Deccan during the sixties of the last century.

73 "Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 252.

74 Prices from 1847 to 1854 are

SATTARA

(1848-1868)

Sattara became a British possession completely in 1848.⁷⁵ The extent of the late Raja's territory was 106 miles from north to south, and about 150 miles from east to west. It comprised the talukas of Sattara, Tasgaon, Kurrar, Walwa, Jaoli, Wai, Koreygaon, Khanapur, Khuttao, Punderpur and Baijapur. The talukas near the Syhadri Mountains were the most favoured in soil and climate, the richest, best cultivated and the most populous. These fertile plains were traversed by numerous streams fed by abundant and seasonable rains. They were intersected by lofty mountains whose precipitous sites were clothed with cultivation, whilst their summits were crowned with fields and villages.⁷⁶ The fertility of the talukas was further enriched by innumerable streams issuing from the Syhadri Mountains. These streams were yearly led, with labour and expenditure, to enrich the richest fields of wheat. Indeed, the whole territory afforded the greatest facility for irrigation.

Under the late Government, a large portion of the land had been alienated on rent-free or service tenure, and of that which remained and was assessable, Miras was the largest part. It was owing to this stimulus that the Western Division of the Territory was in the highest state of cultivation.

The above description could be applied to the western districts only, for the eastern talukas of Khanapur, Kuttao, Punderpur and Baijapur were less favoured in soil and climate. They had been subject to vicissitudes of season, and were depopulated by war and famine so that little miras remained. These districts were hence far less highly cultivated than those lying to the west. They were, however, famous for their pasture. The cattle of Baijapur,⁷⁷ owing probably to the salt which impregnates the soil, were very highly esteemed. Cattle were largely imported into this part of the country from Malwa.

⁷⁵ "On the death of the Raja in 1848, the Governor of Bombay, Sir George Clerk, recommended that the heir should be allowed to succeed to the State of Sattara. His Councillors opposed him; his successor differed from him; and Lord Dalhousie pursued the ungenerous course of annexing the State; ... by a large majority of votes the Court sanctioned the annexation."—"India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 25.

⁷⁶ Report No. 419 of October 29, 1851

⁷⁷ "The buffaloes of Beejaipoor are equally celebrated, and the Ghee or clarified butter they yield is said to continue fresh longer than any other."—Report No. 419

Kurrar was the richest agricultural district in the territory and Baijapur was the poorest. The cultivators were industrious and skilful husbandmen. They understood the rotation of crops, the value of manure, and the necessity of allowing soils to be fallow. Individual holdings were small, and farms were frequently held in partnership by two or more families.

On British occupation 2,444,459 English acres were in cultivation. These included alienations but excluded the lands of great feudatories. The revenue yielded was Rs 31,60,795. Reduction, to some extent, as well as revision of rates was, however, necessary. Prices had fallen because of the cessation of Court expenditure, and the spread of a system of good roads which admitted cheaper produce into the district.

Under the late Government, annual advances were necessary to keep up the cultivation, accompanied by yearly remissions. Rents were maintained at so high a standard that large balances accumulated which enabled officers to draw the utmost from the ryots, and even absorb any profits they might have earned in pursuits other than agriculture. The revenue management, though slovenly and defective, did not work ill in practice.⁷⁸

The crops of the Collectorate may be divided into four large groups: (1) Cereals, containing rice, wheat, jawari, bajri, muckey, etc.; (2) Pulses like tooree, gram, moog, mussoor, powtay, chowli, etc.; (3) Oil plants such as kurdey, teel, ambadi, juwur and ground-nut, and (4) Fibrous plants as thag, cotton and ambadee. Besides these were grown ginger, tobacco, sugar-cane, opium, and kulled (a yellow dye) and all kinds of vegetables.

The rich red soil of Jaoli produced sugar-cane by much labour and careful farming. Both native and Mauritius sugar-cane were grown chiefly for local consumption. The western districts produced the finest jawari and those of the east the best bajri, which were the staple foods of the people. Tobacco was grown in considerable quantity, and being of a superior quality, was largely exported inland though not beyond the seas. Opium was produced in Sattara and Koreygaon in very small quantity. Sun, tag, ambadi and gayal were produced to a limited extent for local consumption in the manufacture of coarse cloths and ropes.

Such was Sattara on British occupation. It is a matter for regret that no statistical information on the area under cultivation, the col-

⁷⁸ Report No. 419 of 1851.

lections and prices for the period, are available for this territory while under native rule.

The new survey, which began in Sattara in 1853, spread to Tasgaon in the same year. It entered Khuttao and Mayni in 1858, Koreygaon and Khanapur in 1859, Wai in 1860, and terminated its labours in Jaoli and Walwa in 1862-63. We may now take up the study of the economic conditions prevalent on the introduction of the new survey into some of these talukas as typical of the Sattara Collectorate. Tasgaon, the first of the talukas to be surveyed, had been a Jagir which had lapsed to Government when the last Jagirdar, Pureshram Gunpatrow Bhow-sahel Putwerdhun, died on the 8th June,⁷⁹ 1848. On the lapse of this rich territory, the Collector was requested to proceed with the introduction of the new survey immediately.⁸⁰

The Tasgaon taluka was looked upon as occupying an important position on the map of the Bombay Presidency.⁸¹ It was of a trapeze formation, the hills were blunt and denuded of trees, and even the grass on their slopes was poor and afforded little nutriment to the village cattle. The hills were covered with fine, but not generally deep, black soil, which was in some cases under cultivation, but was generally used by the public for grazing their horses and cattle. Iron was obtained in some parts of the taluka and was put to use extensively in the neighbourhood. The iron, though of a fair quality, was rather soft.

Writing on the past revenue history of the Jagir, the Superintendent said that the ryots had been oppressed and all improvements brought to an end. They had been treated as mere labourers who had to surrender all their earnings to their chief or his retainers. The advent of British rule, wrote the Superintendent, either to please his superiors or to exercise his imagination, had been productive "of anything but the highest benefit to the inhabitants". Three years after their occupation, Mr. Rogers records that "the effect of an attempt to levy the full nominal rental in 1851 in some of the villages was to throw much of the land out of cultivation . and it was a long time before matters found their proper level, after causing much suffering to the inhabitants."⁸²

⁷⁹ Letter No. 997 of July 5, 1849

⁸⁰ Letter No. 5068 of August 16, 1849

⁸¹ Report of October 14, 1852.

⁸² "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 277.

The principal market towns were those of Sangli, Meritch and Tasgaon. The former held market weekly while the latter held it twice a week. Besides these, there were the bazars of Naguz, Chinchinee, Dewurustee and Pullos. This latter village had considerable transaction with the marts at Sattara, Walwa and Islampur. A brisk trade, especially with Meritch, seemed to go on from all the villages. It exchanged grain, tobacco and other produce for commodities or luxury they required, such as oil, salt, iron, steel, etc. There were a few "kho-tues" in every village who wove cotton fabrics. The cloth they made was of an extremely rough texture and not durable so that they had sunk into poverty and were put out of competition by European goods. The Dhungurs (shepherds) in some villages manufactured native woollen fabrics called kumlies, used by the ryot for protection against the changes in weather. The Superintendent did not deplore "the falling off of the native manufacture" for India to him was dependent on her agricultural prosperity. He wrote, "As European civilization, whenever it comes into contact with the native mind, raises it, it would be well were the additional ideas which the natives acquire to lead them into increased skill in high farming."

The whole agricultural population was deeply involved in debt, and borrowed money from sawkars at an exorbitant interest. The principal of such a debt the villager never intended to pay, and he was frequently too much involved ever to meet regular instalments of interest. This occasionally caused the sawkar to give up recovering his debt whereupon the ryot went to a fresh party with whom he commenced a similar game.⁸³

Bijapur, which was later to form a separate Collectorate with several other Canarese talukas, was during our period of narration one of the districts of the Sattara Collectorate. The taluka of Bijapur was intersected by the river Dhom nearly through the centre from west to east. There were no hills whatever in the taluka. Throughout the district the monsoon was precarious and frequently insufficient. Rubi or

⁸³ "The Wanees and Sowears are, of course, here as in other parts of the country, and are a most useful and important part of the community. It is to the agency of some wanees, who settled themselves to maintain a bazar as a centre of attraction for the smaller villages around, that I ascribe the maintenance of the village of Naguz in the state of comparative populousness and prosperity, notwithstanding its agricultural disadvantages. The Sowears are in the habit of making exorbitant demand upon a native population wholly dependent upon them; often they themselves have been first injured and self-defence thus dictates a spirit of chicanery which is afterwards ripened into a habit, from a feeling of power from the promotion of self-interest thereby acquired."—Report of October 14, 1852

a later crop, was, therefore, the chief dependence of the district. In spite of uncertain rains, the soil on the banks of the Dhon, on receiving a single heavy fall of rain, was sufficient to give a fair crop. In dry crop soil the use of manure was almost unknown, and as there was very little wood in the district, the dung of animals was chiefly used for fuel. The crops were those common to plain districts, such as jawari, wheat, gram, cotton and oil seeds. The jawari and a large part of the other crops were consumed within the district.

The chief town of the district was the ancient city of Bijapur,⁸⁴ which, even in its prime, could not have contained more than half a million inhabitants.⁸⁵ The population in 1852 amounted to 10,100 souls, not exclusively inhabiting any one quarter of the ancient city, but scattered about in single houses or small groups among the streets of the ruins. Of the total population about 2,300 were Mussulmans, "generally sunk in sloth and vice." Many of these lived on Inams conferred by the ancient Government, the British, or from the court of Hyderabad. The town had little trade and but few manufactures. There were about 330 souls who lived by weaving and 270 from dyeing for which the water of the town was considered to be very suitable. In about 1850 the town had risen to activity; a decent bazar of small extent, with neatly arranged shops, had been built and occupied, and presented the only spot of life and order among the surrounding ruins. In 1857, when the town was made a military station, much benefit was derived by the mercantile classes.

There were small bazars at several villages in and near the district which were resorted to by the people for the barter of their produce. Bijapur was, perhaps, the only place deserving of the name of a market town, and even it was a very second rate one. Bagulkote, Kuladighi, Utni, Malingpur and Jumkhandi were all places where there was considerable trade and a demand for agricultural produce. To these places the chief part of the surplus produce found its way, occasionally

⁸⁴ "There are doubtless larger ruined cities in the world, but none possibly whose fall is so recent and so complete. The public edifices and a large number of the more substantial private buildings are still standing in various stages of decay. This very incompleteness of destruction of Beejapoort realises to the mind's eye the busy population which formerly existed among these now silent ruins and by contrast enhances the present solitude, and makes up a picture of desolation, which has probably no parallel in the world."—Letter No. 301 of June 27 1860 (From Mr. W. C. Anderson to Mr. J. D. Inverarity.)

⁸⁵ The population in 1860 was 55,714; houses 11,575; agricultural cattle 18,176; cows and buffaloes 27,450; sheep and goats 29,704 Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No CCXXXV, p. 203

conveyed by the ryots themselves, but more frequently brought by traders coming from those places.

Means of communication with great markets was very limited as only one line of cleared road intersected the district from north to south—that from Hubli to Sholapur. Cocoanuts, supari, and cotton cloth, the produce of Hubli and of North Canara, were conveyed in large quantities to Barsi and the districts beyond. This route was of little importance to the exports of Bijapur. It was only helpful in so far as the traffic on it brought some demand for grain and fodder. There was another route for the exports of Bijapur, but being incomplete it was of little use.

At the time of the new survey, Bijapur Government village contained 671 square miles, and had a population of 49,482, equal to 74 to the square mile—"an exceedingly low average, not more than half that commonly met with in the plain districts of the Southern Maratha Country." The entire absence of trading or manufacturing towns may have been responsible for this scantiness of population. In the whole district there were about 1,352 souls, who derived a livelihood from manufactures, of whom 997 were weavers and 355 dyers. The people were generally exceedingly poor. The returns made out before the survey showed 17 carts in the whole district, though the country was a level plain and favoured the use of wheeled vehicles.

In 1818, Bijapur had been included in the territory of the Raja of Sattara, and its early revenue history was none too happy. "The rule of the Raja does not seem to have been popular with any class of people except the highest—the Chiefs and the Brahmins." In the distant talukas much was left to the discretion of the village and district officers. Such a system had received, to a certain extent, the evils of the farming system. The area under cultivation in the time of the native rule did not vary much, but great fluctuations in revenue were experienced. The maximum amount was collected in 1828-29 of Rs.83,613, the minimum in 1832-33 of Rs.28,121, the average realisations were Rs.65,869. From 1841-42, up to the time of the settlement, the realisation, with occasional checks, was on the whole steadily diminishing, and the introduction of British rule appeared to have done little to amend the deterioration. The years 1849 to 1851 exhibited an increase of cultivated areas. But decline again set in in 1852, and the two succeeding years, so that conditions were the same as on the death of the Raja.

Ever since the territory passed into British hands till the new survey, the revenue management continued as it was under the late Raja. All that was done was to give every possible protection to the ryot; the remissions were larger than before and care was taken that they should reach the cultivators.⁸⁶ The average realisation for the seven years was Rs.56,344, and the average remission for failure of crops and poverty Rs.18,099, or the enormous proportion of 32% in the collections. The land revenue realisation during the survey operations for the three years ending 1858/59 were Rs.76,556, Rs.77,070 and Rs.78,380 respectively.

The years succeeding the New Survey, from 1855-56 to 1861-62, showed a continued rise in land revenue from Rs.63,764 in 1855 to Rs.73,035 in 1862. Between 1862 to 1866 the revenue fluctuated, reaching the lowest figure (Rs.68,698) in 1863-64.

In 1860, when the survey report on Bijapur had been submitted, the Superintendent, the Collector and the Revenue Commissioner were of the opinion that by opening the inland communication toward the coast, the export trade of the district in oil-seeds and cotton would receive a great impetus. The contemplation of opening a railway from Sholapur to Bijapur, a distance of 65 miles, would also add to the benefit of the ryots. The opening of the Kumbarle Ghaut, leading to Chiplun, had greatly benefited the export of valuable produce and grains to the west coast via Kurra. A line of road from Bijapur to Kurra, about 114 miles long, had been marked out in 1855 and was completed in the subsequent year, with the exception of two intervals of about 15 and 50 miles from Bijapur amounting to about 20 miles altogether. The Superintendent requested that the repair of these gaps on the road should be undertaken, and unless that was done, the road for the time being was perfectly useless for wheeled carts leaving Bijapur in that direction.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Remission on account of failure of crops, poverty, etc.

Years	Rupees
1848-49	12,287
1849-50	24,002
1850-51	16,460
1851-52	13,067
1852-53	21,826
1853-54	26,669
1854-55	12,382

(Statistics given in Letter No. 301 of June 27, 1860.)

⁸⁷ Correspondence dealing with Beejapur Settlement were:

Letter No. 251 of October 14, 1856; Government Resolution No. 5305 of

In 1858, Khuttao and Mayni, petty subdivisions of Khanapur taluka, were surveyed. Except in the east and south-east, they were well placed for markets. Phultum and Sattara were its two chief centres of trade. There were few cotton and blanket weavers while most of the people lived by tillage. A road from Sholapur to Sattara crossed the group, and there was ready communication with Phultum by two roads. In the twelve years, from 1847 to 1858, the tillage had stood at 165,763 acres on an average, and the collections for the same period at Rs 91,607.

The mountainous districts of the Sattara Collectorate comprised the Puruli, Mehra and Solsi turufs of the Jaoli taluka, and the Government villages in a part of the Phultum turufs of the Tasgaon taluka. Among the dry crop, grains like nachni, wurree, sawa, kurla, etc., were grown, while both in the hills and plain villages the irrigated crops consisted of rice, wheat and sugar-cane.

The trade of these districts was very limited, and owing to the poverty of the soil there was little surplus produce. Besides, the difficulty in means of communication placed great obstacles in the way of the disposal of the little that could be sent out. The principal markets were Tarla and Pal, at which weekly bazars were held, and at which "nachni" "sawa" and "ooreed" were chiefly sold, as well as a small amount of coarse woollen and cotton cloths. The principal market of the Phultum turuf was Phultum itself, from which place there was a considerable trade with the Concan in jawari, gram, wheat, ghee, oil, goul, etc. This was conveyed on bullocks to Chiplun. The bullocks were laden on their journey back with supari, dried and fresh salt-fish, cocoanuts, etc. From the Puruli turuf, the city of Sattara was supplied with wood, charcoal, grass and kurdhi. This was conveyed either on bullocks, mules, or donkeys, or more commonly on the backs and heads of the ryots themselves. The country was quite impracticable for carts, and in many parts even for bullocks. There was a small weekly bazar at the town of Purli itself, chiefly for the sale of the coarser kinds of grain, ghee, wood and charcoal. There were, besides, weekly bazars at Mehra and Bannoli for the sale of grain and coarse woollen cloth. Small trade

December 17, 1855, and Govt Resolution No. 30 of January 31, 1856, Letter No. 301 of June 27, 1860, Letter No. 1846 of October 27, 1860

"What ought to be supplied at once is a second class moorumed road without bridges, but with slopes of the nullahs cleared; and if the full amount necessary cannot now be sanctioned, a sanction of Rs 50 per mile, at the very least, should be allowed, and the work carried out by the Executive Engineer"—Letter No. 1846 of 1860 (Mr J. N. Rose, Revenue Commissioner.)

between Mehra and Bannoli was carried on by means of pack bullocks. The principal outlet for the surplus produce of the Solsi and Mehra turufs was the hill-station of Mahableshwar.

The manufactures in these districts consisted exclusively of coarse woollen and cotton cloth, the latter to the value of about Rs 250 only. The condition of the people was certainly below the average. The villages were small, and consisted of huts which were low-thatched or tiled, with flat roofs and mud walls so commonly found all over the Deccan. Owing to the smallness of the village communities, artisans were not needed.⁸⁸

In 1859 the survey spread to the talukas of Koreygaon and Khanpur. The black soil of Koreygaon was superior to any other in the Sattara Collectorate, and due to the numerous streams the bagyhaet cultivation was fairly extensive.

The manufactures of Koreygaon consisted of all kinds of country cloths and kumlies. Inferior carts were also made in a few villages, and found ready sale among the numerous cart-men who resided in or passed through the district. There were only four market villages, namely, Rehmutpore, Kumta, Koreygaon and Deoor. Of these, Rehmutpore was the only one worthy of note. Here grain and country cloths were bought and sold as well as inferior cattle, while at other markets no cattle were to be had at all. Deoor was principally a cloth market. The importance of Rehmutpore was due to its distance from the Sattara market, just as the inferiority of the others was due to their proximity to the Sattara mart which naturally attracted the people in all transactions whether in selling or buying. Wai, nearer to Rehmutpore, was superior as a market for the sale and purchase of grain, cloth and cattle.

The high rate of assessment before the survey could only be paid due to the earnings from cart-hire, from wages for labour in the construction and repair of roads, and especially from the railway, where wages were very high.⁸⁹ Were it not for these facilities for earning money, much land would have been thrown out of cultivation.⁹⁰ The district possessed the greatest advantages in an excellent climate, prox-

⁸⁸ Report of July 18, 1859.

⁸⁹ "A good deal of money came in from wages earned on the construction of the G. I. P. Railway and from hiring out the carts for the Poona and Sattara traffic."—"Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 281.

⁹⁰ Report of December 12, 1859.

mity to large markets, and abundant means of communication, not only with those in its vicinity but also with those at a distance.⁹¹

In Khanapur, there were several small markets within the limits of the district, but the chief mart was the large trading town of Kurrar which was about ten miles to the west. The road from Bijapur to Kurrar, as contemplated in 1855, was completed in 1860 and opened for traffic. It ran through the south of Khanapur from east to west. The Belgaum Sattara road via Tasgaum also ran through the west of the district. The western group of villages was more favoured as regards proximity to markets and ready means of communication. They also had the great advantage of a good climate, and enjoyed a sufficient and certain fall of rain especially to the east. There were no manufactures, a few weavers were scattered through the different villages. The people appeared to be generally in fair condition. Indebtedness did not prevail to as great an extent as elsewhere.⁹²

Lastly, turning to Punderpur, the most important trading centres were Sangoli, Mungelveda, Nazereh, Jaoli and Jutt. Of these the first two and the last were the best, showing much activity as compared with the others. Jutt had the advantage of being a cattle market, and as such was resorted to when cattle of an inferior quality were to be bought and sold. When anything of an important nature was to be transacted, Punderpur and Sholapur were invariably visited, the latter especially as affording a surer and more profitable sale for every kind of produce, and a greater facility for purchasing than any other market. Barsi was a great market for cattle, and Sholapur stood next. Jawari, bajri, cotton and kurdī were the principal products and were even exported to other districts.

The manufacture of coarse blankets and cotton cloths in use amongst the cultivators and their families was in sufficient quantities for local demand; but the quality was too inferior for the articles to meet with sale elsewhere. Mills for pressing the oil from the kurdī seed were numerous and the quantity of oil pressed was very great. There were no dyers in this part of Punderpur.

The unfavourable climate and failure of the past seasons had reduced the ryots to dire poverty. Very few of them were free from debt, and still fewer had the means of cultivating their fields in a proper man-

⁹¹ Letter No. 19 of January 12, 1860

⁹² Letter No. 19 of January 12, 1860

ner. The ryots of this part of the Collectorate were a most inert set of people as compared with the cultivators south of the Krishna. A wholesome administration with an equitable assessment would improve the condition of the people, but their character, and the seasons they had had for the past twenty years, had much to do with their poverty and future improvement⁹³

The market towns to the east of Punderpur were at Punderpur, Bhalowni, Ankloo and Nataputa⁹⁴. Those beyond them at Kurkumb, Teenboorni, Beembla and Indapur were also visited by the people of the villages within reach of them during the dry season when rivers were low; while those at Sangoli, Atpadh, Polew, Mumhuswur and Phultum were resorted to throughout the year. Of these markets, those at Punderpur and Phultum were by far the largest, those at Kurkumb and Indapur came next, and, with a slight advantage in the case of Mumhuswur, the rest were very inferior. Punderpur was the principal mart, where all commodities met with a ready sale⁹⁵. In consequence of the yearly and monthly assemblage of pilgrims there, grass, kurdi and fuel obtained very high prices. The same with slight modification may be said of the Phultum mart.

This eastern part of Punderpur had large, extensive grazing lands peculiarly favourable for the rearing of sheep, and large and numerous flocks were seen grazing in every direction. These grazing grounds had given an impetus to the manufacture of wool into coarse blankets, or kumlies, giving employment to a large portion of the population. These kumlies were taken for sale to the Concan just before the setting in of the rainy season in very large quantities.

The condition of the people in these villages, and particularly in Nataputa perganna, was not as bad as that of those in other parts of Punderpur. There were a few substantial ryots to be found in every village, and in many places the Patels and Cooleurnees were very well-

⁹³ Report from Wadgaon Camp, January, 1857

"The ryots as a class were badly off, few being free from debt or possessing means to cultivate their lands properly. . . The estimated effect of the new rate was to raise the assessment from Rs 61,080 to Rs 78,820 or 29%" "Land Revenue of Bombay," p. 76.

⁹⁴ "In 1857-58 the survey settlement was introduced into the remaining 69 villages of Punderpoor and into 27 villages of Napeputa petty division of Khatavni Safara."—Report of November 28, 1857. (From Mr Price.)

⁹⁵ "Dry cow-dung cakes, which, in other situations would not meet with sale at all, are to score a source of profit at Punderpoor"—Report of November 28, 1857

to-do. This, however, was due to the fact that the best lands of many of the villages were held by them at a very low rent, and wherever it had been practicable they had largely increased their Inams by encroachments on adjoining Government lands.⁹⁶

In the report on the new rates of assessment for Koreyaon and Khanapur talukas, it was suggested that an advantage be taken of the then compulsory inactivity of the Public Works Department for surveying the streams with a view to constructing works of irrigation. The Government accepted the proposal and called upon the Chief Engineer for an early report on the measures to be adopted.⁹⁷ In 1860, Captain Kennedy was authorised to name an officer to assist him in the preparation of a detailed plan and an estimate for a canal, the outlay for which was not to exceed Rs.5,000.⁹⁸ Such was the initiative taken in 1860, but we find that no satisfactory steps were taken till 1862.⁹⁹

Such works of irrigation were to be made payable by the levy of an extra assessment, and Government was not to facilitate the ryot, wrote the Commissioner, unless the holders of such irrigable lands should previously stipulate either an extra assessment to be placed on these irrigable lands, or that they should pay for a certain proportion of the water made available.¹⁰⁰ The Government accepted these proposals of the Commissioner. The policy of taxing the water supply for irrigation also met the approval of the Home Authorities.¹⁰¹

Between 1860 to 1863 the survey spread to Wai, Sattara, Jaoli and Walva. The market towns for the Wai taluka were Wai, Phultun, Bhor, Khandala and Padli. Of these, Wai had a large daily market for both cotton and grain, and was visited by people from all parts of the district. Phultun was also an important centre for cloth and grain. Bhor

⁹⁶ "Kulumbvoole and Pulessmambel are places where instances of the first and Bamboordee of the second may be particularly found. These are all in Natapoota perganna."—Report of November 28, 1857.

⁹⁷ Resolution No. 395 of January 28, 1860.

⁹⁸ Resolution of February 6, 1860.

⁹⁹ Letter No. 204 of January 28, 1862.

"I would take this opportunity of again bringing forward . a view to construction of works of irrigation . Under Resolution of Government dated February 6 last, Captain Kennedy . was authorised to mature any small projects . . As far as I can ascertain, no steps whatever were taken."—Report No. 55 of January 28, 1861 (From Captain Anderson.)

¹⁰⁰ Letter No. 204 of January 28, 1862.

¹⁰¹ "The rule laid down by you that there must be an ownership in chief in the sources of supply vested in the state to justify the levy of a water rate in any case, seems to me undeniably sound."—Despatch No. 27 of August 15, 1863, para 12.

was a first-rate weekly market town: Sheerwul stood second, while the two remaining were small villages affording poor facilities for barter. For cattle, the ryots often resorted to Baramati, rather than Wai or Phultun.¹⁰² Among the products were nachni, sawa, and wuree, very inferior grains which formed the staple food of the people in the hill districts.¹⁰³

There were no manufactures of any consequence. A few weavers were met here and there throughout the villages, more particularly in the town of Wai. Wai, a town of about 11,000 inhabitants, was the only place of importance in the district. It was a favourite place of residence for Brahmins and other persons living on their means and not engaged in trade and agriculture. Consequently a considerable demand for articles of food existed there and in the surrounding villages.¹⁰⁴

Sattara and Jaoli followed next in 1861-62, and the survey neared its completion with Walva in 1862-63. From the above review of a few talukas, we may now be in a position to gain an idea of the conditions prevalent in Sattara in the first half of the 19th century. Both Sattara and Jaoli were well supplied with markets, especially Sattara, which required every kind of grain and fodder for the cattle. Mahableshwar consumed most of the products of Jaoli, and was tolerably accessible by a number of bullock tracks. Walva carried on a trade for nine months with the sea-port of Ratnagiri, or eastwards with Sangli and Miraj.

The land revenue and tillage for the five years 1852 to 1856 had to be procured from the survey report on each individual taluka. Adding the tillage area and the revenue collections separately of each of the eleven talukas for each of the five years, we have the following results:¹⁰⁵

Years	Tillage in Acres	Collection in Rupees
1852-53	722,437	9,46,482
1853-54	712,115	9,11,069
1854-55	706,370	9,90,025
1855-56	772,518	10,31,576
1856-57	930,045	10,58,368

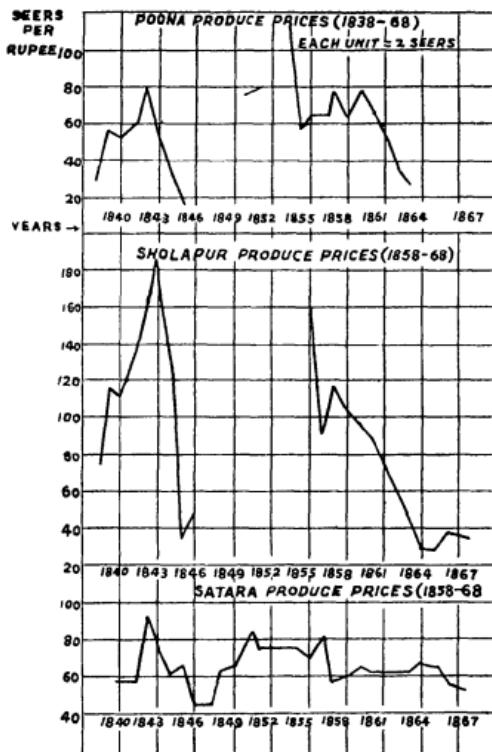
For the remaining ten years (1858-68) we have the collections, remissions and outstandings, but no data regarding tillage. The re-

¹⁰² Report of September 1, 1860

¹⁰³ Letter No. 55 of January 22, 1861.

¹⁰⁴ Letter No. 55 of January 22, 1861.

¹⁰⁵ Survey Reports were consulted for Koregaon, Khanapur and Wai



missions varied during the first seven years from Rs.97,275 in 1857-58 to Rs.26,410 in 1863-64, and fell to Rs.580 at the end of the completion of the New Survey. The collections showed a more steady progress, with the exception of the year 1862-63, when they fell by a lac of rupees, but the next year reached the highest level within the ten years under review.¹⁰⁶

Years	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees	Outstandings in Rupees
1857-58	14,48,129	97,275	98
1858-59	15,27,937	33,835	54
1859-60	15,50,247	10,962	38
1860-61	16,15,565	15,516	Nil
1861-62	17,07,929	28,051	Nil
1862-63	16,16,855	36,613	27
1863-64	18,49,188	26,410	1,713
1864-65	17,40,852	580	2,116
1865-66	17,22,393	552	117
1866-67	17,20,517	388	183

The price of Indian millet for the thirty years ending in 1868 can be divided into four distinct periods. The striking feature is that the fluctuations are not half as many as those in other districts of the Deccan. During the thirty years the rupee price of millet, which was the staple grain of the district, varied from 93 lbs. in 1842 to 53 lbs. in 1868, and averaged 54 lbs. Nowhere in the whole range of thirty years did the prices reach the ruinous level of a 100 lbs. the rupee, as it did invariably in nearly all other Districts.

PRICES (INDIAN MILLET)¹⁰⁷

First Period (1840-49)

Years	Prices
1840	58
1841	58
1842	93
1843	77
1844	61
1845	65
1846	44
1847	45
1848	61
1849	63

¹⁰⁶ Report of January 12, 1860; Report No. 55 of January 22, 1861.

The "Sattara Gazetteer" was used for several talukas except for Beejapur whose data was collected from its own Gazetteer, pp. 358, 368, 374, 377, 379, 382. "Bijapur Gazetteer," p. 479.

¹⁰⁷ "Sattara Gazetteer," p. 191.

Second Period
(1850-56)

1850	85
1851	74
1852	74
1853	74
1854	74
1855	70
1856	81

Third Period
(1857-65)

1857	57
1858	60
1859	66
1860	62
1861	62
1862	62
1863	62
1864	67
1865	66

Fourth Period
(1866-68)

1866	67
1867	53
1868	53

AHMEDNAGAR

(1838-1868)

Our labours over the thirty years (1838-1868) of Ahmednagar's economic history can be divided into three distinct decades. Let us with that purpose consider the revenue condition during the first ten years opening with 1838¹⁰⁸.

Years	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees
1838-39	7,17,972	3,63,906
1839-40	8,96,088	2,49,177
1840-41	9,74,391	2,27,170
1841-42	9,26,873	2,98,048
1842-43	10,95,926	1,10,790
1843-44	7,79,140	3,18,975
1844-45	5,95,645	4,79,444
1845-46	6,28,227	4,90,876
1846-47	9,69,272	2,12,222
1847-48	11,47,787	62,192

During the ten years, the revenue collections rose from Rs.7,17,972 in 1838-39 to Rs.11,47,787 in 1847-48, and the remissions fell from Rs.3,63,906 to Rs.62,192. This result seems encouraging, but during these ten years under review, we find that the remissions touched Rs.4 lacs twice in 1844 and 1845. Though the revenue rose from 7 lacs in

¹⁰⁸ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 472. No tillage area was available.

1838 to the figure of Rs.11 lacs in the decade, which gave a clear margin of Rs 4 over the collection of 1838, the revenue had within the ten years reached the level of Rs.7 lacs (1843), Rs 5 lacs (1844) and Rs.6 lacs in 1845. This fluctuation is one of the indications of poor progress. Of the nine years ending in 1851 the *Gazetteer* said: "Of these nine years the three seasons 1843, 1844 and 1845 were most unfavourable. Scanty and uncertain rainfall, want of fodder and cattle disease, and two severe outbreaks of cholera reduced parts of the District to great distress."¹⁰⁹

Hardly had the season of scarcity passed, when, within two years, the season of 1847 brought in a realisation of Rs.11,47,787. If the Government were more liberal in their collections for a few years following such bad harvests to which the Deccan was so prone, the ryots might have had time to regain the loss sustained during the bad seasons. This rise of revenue was too exorbitant when one realises that the collections of the two preceding years (1846 and 1847) were only Rs.6 and 9 lacs respectively. This desire to make up the loss had a ruinous effect on the progress of a district. It may be shown that the year following 1847 showed a realisation of Rs.7 lacs with a remission of Rs.3,13,174.

No prices are available from 1838 to 1843, but from 1844 to 1848 the Ahmednagar produce prices (pounds the rupee) were the following in Sangamner:¹¹⁰

Years	Jawari in Pounds	Bajri in Pounds	¹¹⁰
1844-45	117	93	
1845-46	57	39	
1846-47	225	186	
1847-48	210	174	

In 1844 jawari was sold at 117 lbs. and bajri at 93 lbs. The next year, 1845, as we see from the collections, was a year of scarcity, and both jawari and bajri rose to 57 lbs. and 39 lbs. respectively. The two years ending 1847-48 were years of very low prices; and even though 1847 saw a rise in the prices, yet they were still ruinously low. With the prices standing at 210 lbs. for jawari and 174 lbs. for bajri, the Government realised a revenue of Rs.11,47,787 in 1847, which was the highest sum realised in the ten years reviewed. With such revenue col-

¹⁰⁹ I have chosen Sangamner because the produce prices of this taluk were available till 1868; we had also the prices of wheat and gram but I have chosen jawari and bajri for our purpose.

¹¹⁰ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 323.

lections on one hand, and ruinous prices on the other, the condition of the ryots paying a total assessment of Rs.11 lacs out of a full estimated rental of Rs.12 lacs, and selling their produce at 210 lbs. and 174 lbs. the rupee, is enough to impoverish any people.

In August of 1839, the Revenue Commissioner reported that immense tracts of rich black soil had been unsold, and even where land had been sold the returns were scanty. He suggested to Government the encouragement of irrigation and lowering of assessment. No more cotton, sugar-cane or oil-seeds was grown than was wanted for local use. The people were too poor and the rainfall had been too uncertain of late years. A systematic reduction of the rate by 20% and 25% was made in some talukas¹¹¹. All these devices, however, proved inadequate, and when the regular survey and settlement began, the cultivators were generally in a condition of depression and impoverishment.

The seasons of 1840 and 1841 were on the whole tolerable; but in 1842 though the harvest was good the season was so unhealthy that as many as 13,613 people died of cholera, and 84,338 cattle died of disease. So much had the people suffered that no less than 50,000 bighas went out of cultivation¹¹². These seasons of favourable, or at their worst fair, harvest, were followed by three years of scanty rainfall and distress amounting almost to famine¹¹³. So wide spread and complete was the ruin of 1844 that half of the villages, that is 152 of 305 in one taluka, could not pay one quarter of their rental.¹¹⁴ "Many villages were reduced to a deplorable state. The people left the country taking with them whatever they could remove. The absence of any nourishment for man or beast, their gates closed, and tenantless huts were un-frequented, and failing wells, and parched and waste fields gave large tracts the appearance of worthless and unproductive desert."¹¹⁵ The people who remained under such conditions, were able to maintain themselves due to a moderation in price of grain which was due to the improved means of communications and commercial intercourse with the neighbouring districts.¹¹⁶ The season of 1845 was worse; to describe it in a few words, we may say that in twenty miles between Singwa and Newasa there was not a single field which was not withered.¹¹⁷ Some

¹¹¹ "British India Land Revenue Settlement," E. Stack, p. 461

¹¹² Bom. Gov. Rec. No. 1504 of 1844, pp. 22, 25

¹¹³ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 477.

¹¹⁴ Bom. Gov. Rec. Rec. No. 11 of 1847, p. 143.

¹¹⁵ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 478.

¹¹⁶ Letter of November 6, 1845.

¹¹⁷ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 480.

further idea of the distress may be gathered from the condition of the husbandry of the Sangamner Taluka on the failure of rain in 1844, 1845 and 1846. "In the year 1844, the monsoon commenced as early as 19th May, and we had constant and heavy thunderstorms and heavy fall of rain. . . . Yet the fall of the rain throughout the monsoon was indifferent. It was worse in 1845, and during the months of April and May 1846, the generality of the people had nothing more than carrots and other garden roots to live on. Many indeed could scarcely even procure these, so great was the distress that the mahars and lowest of the people were compelled to eat wild plants and berries, and to their eating such trash the severity of the cholera that season may be attributed. I have been assured that comparatively few of those who had any regular means of living, and were able to procure grain, fell victims to the scourge."¹¹⁸ Such are the poignant descriptions that the reader may come across in many a report throughout this decade.

Let us now turn to the next ten years (1848-58) and study the progress in the land revenue collections.

Years	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees ¹¹⁹
1848-49	7,66,121	3,13,174
1849-50	7,13,431	2,23,763
1850-51	6,96,710	1,32,120
1851-52	6,56,880	1,52,930
1852-53	7,74,040	20,910
1853-54	6,88,790	1,04,700
1854-55	9,29,580	6,680
1855-56	9,62,470	37,650
1856-57	10,45,950	17,740
1857-58	11,19,050	4,400

Looking through the seasonal reports of these ten years, it appeared that only the years 1852-53 and 1854-55 could be called good seasons. The years 1851-52 and 1853-54 were positively bad, while the remaining were fairly good in which the rainfall, though sometimes failing in the early season, made up later on. On looking at the revenue collections, the years 1849 to 1851 and 1853 show a fall in the collections, but from 1854 to 1857 a progressive rise took place, accompanied by a regular fall in the remissions.

¹¹⁸ Report of October 20, 1847. (By Lieutenant Burgess)

¹¹⁹I have calculated the collections after subtracting the remissions and outstandings Data taken from the "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 472.

The prices in Sangamner for the same period were as follows:

Years	Jawari in Lbs.	Bajri in Lbs. ¹²⁰
1848-49	120	96
1849-50	122	117
1850-51	117	105
1851-52	132	96
1852-53	93	75
1853-54	123	89
1854-55	117	93
1855-56	117	90
1856-57	102	93
1857-58	93	81

Among the prices the fluctuations were considerable. There was no decided or long continued rise in prices¹²¹. A fairly decent equilibrium seems to have been maintained, though as usual over a 100 lbs. the rupee. From 1853-54 to 1856-57 it fell from 93 lbs. to 102 lbs. For nearly the whole decade, with the exception of 1852 and 1857, the prices ranged at the ruinous level of 117 lbs. to 132 lbs. the rupee.

These ten years (1848-1858) witnessed the spread of the New Survey. The reports on the talukas surveyed will give us an idea of the conditions prevalent.

In 1848, the Dang villages were surveyed. They were chiefly inhabited by the "Cooles" whose idle and improvident habits were partly responsible for the agricultural poverty.¹²² The poverty, according to Mr. Wingate, might have been more attributable to the vicious nature of the past revenue management, besides, the testimony of Mr. Tytler¹²³ was sufficient to show the necessity of placing the land assessment on a more equitable basis. No proper revenue records being available, it was difficult to draw any definite conclusions on the past revenue management. The assessment of past years on the whole was less heavy here than in most districts of the Deccan.¹²⁴

In the Dang villages of the Ankola taluka the total population numbered 23,064 souls, the agricultural classes gave a total of 14,185, the

120 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 323.

121 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 323.

122 "The people were mostly poor, and the pressure of the population on 55 to a square mile... The coolies who formed half of the population were careless, thoughtless and improvident, generally in debt and given to plundering."—"Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 162.

123 "I feel that any opinion of mine," wrote Mr. Wingate, "on the operations of Mr. Tytler whose experience on all points bearing on the subject at issue is so much greater than mine, must be of little value and I will therefore be brief in my observations."—Report No. 215 of November 20, 1848.

124 Report No. 215 of November 20, 1848.

rest amounted to 8,879.¹²⁵ An inquiry was held into the number of ploughs and bullocks that were engaged in the villages of the district. For that purpose, the number of acres under cultivation were ascertained. The result showed that there was one plough to every 30 acres in cultivation, that the allotted acres to each bullock were 5, and that the population of those fifty-six villages was 95 to the square mile.

Cloth was brought from Bombay, Ahmednagar, Nagpur, Berar and Khandesh, and dyed thread from the neighbouring town of Sangammer as well as metals, groceries and salt from the bunder. There were sawkars of eminence at Ankola, and "hoondies" payable at Ahmednagar were even procurable. In spite of a few commercial advantages, there were no manufactures worth the name. No made roads facilitated trade, and there was nothing to relieve the pressure of the people on the soil for subsistence.¹²⁶ No part of Ahmednagar called for reforms more urgently. The new assessment was a reduction of nearly 34 per cent on the old Maratha nominal rent.

According to the Government regulation, the "Gaeern" or hill pastures in the Poona Collectorate in 1844 had been given as free pasture or as a common to the villagers. In 1848, Captain Wingate writing on the waste lands in the "mawullee" or Dang district, was of the opinion, that they should be made to hold legitimately a revenue as any portion of land actually cultivated. He stated that he had no doubt that the value of grass lands would be greatly enhanced by their being sold, "instead of being enjoyed as untaxed common". The pasture could not be protected in any way, with the result that much of its produce was wasted, or never came to maturity. Besides, it did not probably afford one half the quantity of grass for pasturage and other purposes that it would, if it were appropriated by individuals. Besides, these untaxed commons, wrote Wingate, encouraged lazy and improvident habits in the ryot.

Under the late Government, in the rice districts, the rice lands were assessed very heavily, and other arable lands and pastures at a very low rate, or altogether free. By this system the latter (rice districts) were indirectly taxed by means of the heavy assessment placed

¹²⁵ "I perceive that the percentage difference between males and females, in these two sub-divisions of population, is very nearly the same, the latter being 11½ per cent less than the former; in the agricultural classes this seems to afford some evidence of the correctness of these returns"—Lieut. H. I. Day, Report of September 14, 1847, paras. 14 and 19.

¹²⁶ "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 161

on rice lands, thus making the rice land assessment oppressive. Mr. Wingate proposed that wherever the assessment of rice and dry-crop land was moderate, it would be very advantageous to sell the grass lands under the rule of October 1844, whether the districts had been surveyed or not. Where the assessment was heavy, the practice of assigning a portion of the waste for pasturage should be continued, and the rest of the surplus might be sold.

The policy of putting up these pasture lands for sale at the "Huzoor" to speculators, was bitterly complained of, and we find that the policy continued up to 1848. "It is no ordinary grievance to let loose a heartless speculator with no object but that of getting the most of his bargain," wrote Mr. Wingate in 1848. "It is evidently better that the profit derived from the waste over and above the revenue should go to enrich the villagers themselves than a stranger."¹²⁷ According to Mr. Wingate's plan of 1844 the first option on the sale of the grass lands was to be offered to the ryots only on their failure to accept the offer should the pasturage be knocked down to the highest bidder. This system which ought to have been adopted in 1844, seems not to have been put into practice till 1848.

Rain had been failing in Sangammer for the last five or six years, and the condition of the taluka, in comparison with those of the sub-collectorate of Nasik and Ankola, was far worse. In the latter, the proportion of rain had been better, and more lands both bagyhaet and "Jaerayet" were under cultivation than in Sangammer.¹²⁸

Bajri was the principal grain in Sangammer. Its proportion to other kinds of grain was about two to one. The total population was 37,157 out of which 32,203 inhabited Government villages, the remaining 4,954 belonged to the 16 Jagir villages. Sangammer covered about 360 square miles as computed from the acres of 104 villages, which, if measured again by adding the average of the Jagir villages, gave a further addition of 65 miles, making a total of 415 miles in all. The proportion of the population to the square mile was 89%. The people employed in agriculture were 55%.

¹²⁷ Letter No. 122 of June 7, 1848.

128 Talukas	Jaerayet in Acres	Baghayet in Acres	Average
Nasik	117,661	6,467	5%
Sinur	237,473	6,761	3%
Wun Dindori	116,827	7,142	6%
Sangammer	150,026	2,685	1½%

Captain Wingate, on forwarding the rates for assessment¹²⁹ as proposed by Captain Davidson, said that they were not needlessly liberal in light of the five years (1824, 1829, 1831, 1832 and 1838) of very extensive failures, in which remissions from 30 to 70% of the whole demand were granted. The new total assessment was a reduction on the old Maratha nominal rental by 53%.¹³⁰

The survey settlement spread to the taluka of Rahuri in 1849. On the adoption of the new rates of assessment for this taluka, Mr. Wingate wrote that great fluctuation in prices and their depression in seasons of abundance had affected very severely the resources of the ryots. Besides, the heavy assessment, collected by quick instalments, was even more injurious than a contracted market. The assessment had always been too heavy to be defrayed in full, and in a good season the remissions were less and prices continued low. The result was that the ryot was forced to bring to the market more and more produce to raise money to pay Government, while the markets were glutted and prices so ruinously low "that an abundant crop was a misfortune rather than an advantage."¹³¹

¹²⁹ Correspondence regarding the assessment rates.

Captain Davidson No. 33 of February 8, 1847; Govt. Letter No. 3047 of May 25, 1848; Captain Wingate No. 73 of April 6, 1848; Lieutenant Anderson No. 11 of June 30, 1848, Govt. Letter No. 2567 of April 13, 1849; Letter No. 22 of February 19, 1849.

Before we leave Ankola and Sangammer we may give a table of prices for various grains in the market towns for the last 28 and 29 years.

The figures entered are the number of seers selling for a rupee.

Names of Market Towns	What Period of Years	Description of Grains					Remarks
		Rice	Wheat	Gram	Bajri		
Ankoleh	28	16½	21½	25½	30½		A new measure for the seer was introduced in November 1845, which is now the standard one throughout the Collectorate. It is about 15% larger than that hitherto used in Ankoleh, consequently the number of seers at present selling for one rupee will be 15% less than those recorded in this table.
Razoor	28	20½	23½	23	28½		
Thangamur	29	11½	26½	31½	35½		
Doobere	29	13½	23½	26½	32½		
Sangammer	28	11½	25	23½	31		

¹³⁰ "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 164.

¹³¹ Letter No. 244 of December 15, 1849.

"Under the revised assessment, and with longer time allowed for the collection of the instalments, the case will be different, and we may anticipate

The heavy assessment before the introduction of the new survey, the fall in tillage area, the high rate of remissions, showed that Rahuri was much reduced and impoverished.¹³² The manufactures were of an inferior quality and of a very limited number. Trade was confined to the export of grain and sheep, and the import of a few articles required to supply the moderate want of the villagers.¹³³ At the time of the introduction of the survey, the condition of the landholders had become so bad that they had been forced to leave their subdivision and seek work in Bombay and elsewhere.¹³⁴

Let us now briefly survey the conditions of trade prevalent in Nevasa, Ahmednagar, Shivagaon and Jamkhed. About half the produce of Nevasa was exported. The imports were iron, salt, grocery, and cloth of all kinds from Berar and Bombay. About this period (1850) there were only about 100 looms which spun cloth of the coarsest kind. A few blankets were made by the Dhangars (shepherds), but most articles of apparel were imported. The population of Nevasa was 3,268 souls and was the largest town, the others containing just a few more than 1,000 souls. The ryots, though better off than those of Sangamner and Rahuri, were still deeply in debt, the average debt not being less than Rs.100.

In 1851, the city of Nagar, with a population of about 28,600, had considerable trade and manufactures. In Ahmednagar and Bhingar (a neighbouring town) about 1,322 hand looms wove saris for women and cotton cloth. Much of this fine cloth went to Poona, Nasik and other places. There was also a large manufacture of brass vessels and carpets. The chief exports were grain, cotton goods, and articles of hardware. The imports included grain and other supplies from the neighbouring districts, sugar, salt, iron, English cotton goods, yarn from Bombay, rice, oil, turmeric, butter and beetle-nuts from Barsi, and silk and embroidered stuff from Paithan and Yeola. The people were not well-off, but many of them found employment and hired out their cattle with their personal service for the transport of merchandise. There

that prices will be subject to less fluctuation and not fall so rumously low in abundant seasons hereafter. The same reasoning leads me to believe that the unprecedented collection of the last year must have greatly impoverished the district, and induces me to urge the great importance of an immediate sanction being accorded to his proposal, to admit of the introduction of the new settlement at the next Jummabundy."—Captain Wingate, Letter No. 244.

¹³² "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 165.

¹³³ "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 165.

¹³⁴ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 193.

were nearly 1,000 traders, money-lenders, grain merchants and shopkeepers in Ahmednagar who had most of the local trade in their hands, but few of these carried on business on a large scale. The general poverty of the people and lack of sufficient capital did not admit of very brisk trade. Several lines of traffic passed through the sub-division, but there was no main road.

Shivagaon had a considerable number of cotton weavers. The village of Tasgaon had 50 or 60 looms and a large manufacturing population. The cotton cloth was very coarse, being woven either from pure native thread, or a mixture of English and native thread. The chief exports of Shivagaon were cloth, grain, vegetables, oil, butter and sal-flower. These were sent to Nagar and Poona. There were two or three much used bullock tracks, but no cart roads.

The Jamkhed villages were not well placed from Poona and Nagar markets. In spite of this disadvantage, they were generally thriving and contained a large trading and manufacturing population. The manufactured output was chiefly coarse cotton stuff such as turbans. Several villages had a few brassworkers, copper-smiths and bangle-makers. The majority were poor as the people elsewhere. The lines of communication were fairly passable for carts except in the north.

By 1860, the condition of the districts had in many respects changed for the better. Two railways traversed through the Collectorate, and new capital was yearly invested in new wells and fresh cultivation.¹³⁵ The American war, a year or two later, affected the material welfare of the people, and a small cotton crop in a bad year was equal to a full crop under the old rate of prices. The labourer could earn in a fortnight the full assessment of an ordinary holding.Flushed with this prosperity, the Indian ryot lavishly wasted his gains, and Government, anxious to share this temporary prosperity, increased its assessment on the second revision of assessment. The result was that the American war having ended, no sooner had the Americans thrown open their cotton markets than prosperity disappeared.

It now remains to take into consideration the remaining ten years (1858-1868), which were prosperous due to the American Civil War.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ "Land Revenue of Bombay," p. 187

¹³⁶ The collections have been entered after the deduction of remissions and outstandings.

Years	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees
1858-59	2,191,100	11,35,690
1859-60	2,245,909	11,14,270
1860-61	2,199,611	11,50,920
1861-62	2,300,288	12,43,630
1862-63	2,328,214	12,67,980
1863-64	2,394,659	13,22,350
1864-65	2,443,024	13,59,130
1865-66	2,494,413	14,61,260
1866-67	2,422,797	13,68,350
1867-68	2,430,146	13,83,110

In the whole decade the tillage area fell only in 1860 and 1866, and the revenue collections in 1861 and 1863. Comparing the collections of the last decade (1848-58) with those of the one under review, we find that the collection in 1856-57 was 10 lacs and reached by 1865-66 a level of Rs 11 lacs, immediately falling by a lac of rupees, the instant the American war ended. The revenue in 1838 was Rs 7 lacs, while, at the close of 1868, with slight fluctuation, it recorded a rise to an average of Rs 12 lacs. But it must not be forgotten that in the course of 30 years (1838-68), this rise of revenue to a considerable degree must have been influenced by the passing to Government of a few hundred or thousand alienated villages, which must have influenced the tillage area and augmented the Government revenue.

SANGAMNER PRICES¹³⁷

Years	Jawari in Lbs	Bajri in Lbs
1858-59	87	69
1859-60	82	68
1860-61	58	50
1861-62	46	33
1862-63	44	28
1863-64	44	32
1864-65	86	60
1865-66	33	28
1866-67	62	50
1867-68	69	42

From 1858 to 1863 the price of jawari saw a continued rise from 87 lbs. a rupee to 44 lbs. a rupee in 1863. The fluctuations again set in from 1864 when from 11 lbs. it fell to 86 lbs., it again rose to 33 lbs. for jawari and 28 lbs. for bajri, a rise that was never reached during the past decades. From 1866 the prices again commenced to fall. On the whole, the last decade (1858 to 1868) reveals slight fluctuations, and the period of ruinous fall in prices appears to have passed away.

¹³⁷ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 323.

NASIK

(1838-1868)

The survey under the New Land Settlement was undertaken by Mr Goldsmid and Lieutenant Davidson in 1842.¹³⁸ The state of the District was extremely depressed in 1836, and with the failure of rain in 1838, it was still further reduced¹³⁹. Due to the scarcity of rain, there was a considerable rise in the price of grain. As usual, husbandmen were without a store of grain. They were extremely poor and in the majority of cases the profits of the stored grain went to the banyas.¹⁴⁰

By 1843, both Chandore and Wun Dundori had received the new rates of assessment. By November of 1843, about 13 villages of the Sinnur taluka had been surveyed, and Lieutenant Davidson expressed the following opinion on the condition of the people: "The District is at present greatly overrated, and the impoverished condition of the ryot furnish *the most painful evidence* of the baneful effects of a heavy assessment. When we consider how heavily these collections have pressed upon the people of the District, and the involved condition to which they have in a great measure reduced them, I do not think we can reasonably hope to afford relief so imperatively called for and at the same time secure any considerable increase in the Government resources."¹⁴¹ Such was the confession of the man on the spot, who testified to the impoverished condition of the ryot by the heavy land revenue. The Commissioner¹⁴² also expressed his concurrence with the opinion expressed by the Superintendent, and recommended his new rates for adoption.

On the introduction of the New Survey in the District, the former maximum demand of Rs 1,11,679 was reduced to Rs 54,087, a decrease

¹³⁸ Letter of October 14, 1842, Letter No. 3779 of 1839, paras 24 and 29, Letter No. 75 of March 10, 1843; Letter No. 929 of March 28, 1843.

¹³⁹ "Nasik Gazetteer," p. 214.

¹⁴⁰ Letter of November 9, 1839.

¹⁴¹ Report No. 27 of November 2, 1843.

¹⁴² "Admitting, however, the extent of immediate sacrifice at its fullest amount, I am still of opinion, that on just principles and with reference to the wretched state of the agricultural classes in the Sinnur talooka, the rates proposed by the Superintendent should be conceded, and I would accordingly beg leave in concurrence with the Collector and Sub-collector to recommend that the sanction of the Government be given to their introduction."—Letter No. 1338 of December 9, 1843.

on the former assessment of Rs 60,592.¹⁴³ The collections for 1842-43, or the last year of the old rates, had been Rs.73,101, while under the new rates the sum realised was Rs.42,884, which was a decrease of Rs 30,216 over the former revenue.¹⁴⁴ For example, in Sinnur the reduction was 52%, in Chandore it was 55% and in Wun Dindori it came to 31.2% only. The immediate reduction in Sinnur on the revenue collection in 1843-44 was 11%, even more than in Chandore where it was 30%, while in Dindori it came only to 20.1%.¹⁴⁵

We may now follow Lieutenant Day to Nasik in the wake of his survey to get an idea of the condition of the people, markets, prices, etc. of that taluka, which was typical of the Collectorate on the eve of the new settlement.

The total area of Nasik District was 2,26,601 acres 23 guntas, or 315 square miles. The population of the District according to the Survey returns was 49,771 souls, or 151 to a square mile. The town of Nasik itself had a population of 22,502, a little less than half of the whole district. If the town of Nasik was left out, the population of the remainder of the District with that of Wun Dindori and Sinnur was 100 souls to a square mile in Wun Dindori, and 104 souls to a square mile in Sinnur, while the rest of Nasik had 115 souls to the square mile. These figures were only applicable to Government villages, for in Nasik there were 28 jagir villages, many of which were very populous and probably had 120 souls to a square mile, so that the entire District, comprised of Government and alienated villages, could be estimated at 63,500 souls, or 185 to the square mile, which was considerably in excess of other talukas.

The chief road was the Bombay-Agra road which traversed a distance of 18 miles along the western limits of Nasik. Along that route there was an immense traffic in groceries, English cloth, iron, metals, rice and salt from Khandesh and Malwa, as well as vast quantities of merchandise exported from those regions in the shape of country manufactured goods, cotton, opium, etc., flowing down this channel to the ocean, fertilising and enriching the places it traversed. This traffic was expected to increase on the completion of the Thul Ghat Road, and to swell beyond all computation when the projected railway became an accomplished fact.

¹⁴³ I have left out the annas and pies.

¹⁴⁴ Letter No. 31 of October 17, 1844.

¹⁴⁵ Letter No. 35 of November 23, 1844.

There was another route not much less important which skirted the northern boundary of the District leaving the Agra road about 5 miles beyond Nasik; it diverged nearly due east and passed through Chandore and Patoda Districts, entering the Nizam's territories, and from thence to Berar and Nagpur. A number of commodities as well as grains of various sorts were brought down by this route, principally on pack bullocks. This road was only traversed in the fair season. To avoid the angle that was formed by the road on passing the town of Nasik, as well as to be able to pasture their cattle, immense droves of Buntaries left the main route at "Lookyene" and passed directly through the heart of the country from Syekhed on the north-east, to Wari Wari on the south-west. By this route grain was chiefly conveyed on bullocks of which there were an almost interminable succession from sunrise to sunset. Carts bearing cotton seldom took this route because most parts of it were little better than field tracks. There was also an unfinished road from Poona to Sinner on which there was little traffic. If the road was completed it would give considerable impetus to cultivation by opening the Poona market to corn-growing districts. The desire for the completion of this road up to Poona was also expressed by the ryots.

The condition of the people was similar to that of other ryots in the Deccan. They were labouring under pinching poverty "in a country where a great amount of average happiness and prosperity ought to be more easily procurable than in almost any land under heaven." The Superintendent wrote that his experience of agricultural life had enabled him to form a high opinion of the Nasik ryots' intelligence and observation, industry and skill. They possessed abilities which would doubtlessly increase by "the imposition of rates not variable at the seasons," but such as to ensure the ryot in average times a full and plentiful return for his labour, and the means to provide for himself during a period of dearth and scarcity. In spite of the liberal measures which Government had consented to adopt, it was felt that the people had certain improvident and strongly rooted habits and customs which would even defy legislative enactments. The Superintendent wrote of the expenses attending the celebration of marriage, which even the poorest thought it necessary to incur, with the result that the ryot fell irrevocably into the hands of the Sawkars and extortioners. "Thus the festival becomes the fruitful parent of ruin on the one hand, and a generation still deeper plunged in it on the other."¹⁴⁶ Besides, the sys-

¹⁴⁶ This question of the expenses on marriage as mainly responsible for the ryot's poverty was disproved in the report of the "Deccan Riot Commission, (1875)."

tem of law under the British gave every facility to the usurers against the ryot, and the system of borrowing at an exorbitant rate kept the people in a low and depressed condition.

The prices of grain¹⁴⁷ had averaged, for a period of twelve years prior to 1844, about 12% higher than in other districts, and this had fallen during the last four or five years to 6% or 7%; only in 1842 and 1843 had prices in Nasik sunk lower than those in Sinnur, due to drought and locusts.

The survey progressed to Patoda in 1846, and was completed at the end of the approaching jumabundy; there had been severe cholera in the parts of the taluka under assessment, so that the survey had to contend against the combined effects of disease and want.¹⁴⁸ The year 1847 saw the survey of the Desh villages, as well as the Dang. The survey in Peint was completed about 1864, and Malegaon, Baglan, Jaykeda and Abohona were finished off by 1869. At the end of 1869, the second revision settlement began in the eighty-eight Niphad Chandore villages.

To sum up the conditions prevalent in this Collectorate for the years 1818 to 1868, we might take the views of Mr. Erskine. The District in 1818 was plundered by bands of free booters and by its Government; next, 1828-1838, in spite of the establishment of order, it was impoverished by the want of markets and by the exaction of its officials. The advent of the new survey (1840-1847) showed that in almost every part of Nasik the bulk of the people were pinched and disheartened by poverty. The picture of prosperity and comfort that followed the introduction of the new assessment, (1850-1874), as drawn by Mr. Erskine, was, I believe in light of events that followed 1875, over-drawn and wanting in foresight.

No records dealing with the land revenue collection for the earlier period (1818-1850) are available for this sub-collectorate till 1850. Collections in individual talukas for the years 1838 to 1840 were all that could be found. This difficulty of procuring the land revenue of the entire Collectorate was increased when it is remembered that the present Collectorate of Nasik, at our period of review, was only a part of Ahmednagar with some of its present talukas under Khandesh.

¹⁴⁷ A more detailed information on prices with tables is given in my "Letters on Economic Conditions (1818-1826)."

¹⁴⁸ Letter No. 69 of May 28, 1846.

Years	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees ¹⁴⁹
1850-51	3,98,170	11,590
1851-52	3,74,310	39,450
1852-53	4,54,280	11,880
1853-54	4,16,320	30,050
1854-55	4,79,330	3,560
1855-56	4,58,640	20,280
1856-57	5,01,810	2,780
1857-58	5,10,610	2,620

In spite of the progress claimed for the sub-collectorate since 1847, in every alternate year succeeding 1850-51 there was a fall in revenue, followed by remissions amounting to thirty-nine, thirty and twenty-five thousand respectively, in the years 1851, 1853 and 1855.

During the eleven years (1833-43), in spite of the three seasons of scarcity 1833, 1836 and 1838, there was little rise in the price of grain. In 1842 millet sold at 92½ lbs., wheat at 82½ lbs., grams at 82 lbs., and rice at 35 and 32½ lbs. the rupee in Nasik.

NASIK PRODUCE PRICES (Lbs. the Re.) 1832-43

Articles	Chandore	Dindori	Sinnur	Nasik	Mean
Millet	100	92½	97½	80	92½
Wheat	80	87½	72½	72½	78½
Rice	30	37½	35	37½	35
Gram	80	87½	77½	72½	77½

During the next twenty-four years (1844-66) there was a marked rise in the prices of grains. Millet advanced from the average of 88½ lbs. in the ten years ending 1853 to 70 lbs. the rupee in the ten years ending in 1863.¹⁵⁰

NASIK PRODUCE PRICES (Lbs. the Re.) 1844-63

(1844-53)

Articles	Chandore	Niphad	Nasik	Mean
Millet	88½	103½	73½	88½
Wheat	73¾	79½	62½	72
Rice	31¼	38	32½	34
Gram	71	78½	64½	71½

(1853-63)

Articles	Chandore	Niphad	Nasik	Mean
Millet	68½	68	54½	70
Wheat	63	62½	51½	59
Rice	27¾	26½	28	21½
Gram	51	59½	50	53 1/6

¹⁴⁹ "Nasik Gazetteer," pp. 206, 207.

¹⁵⁰ "Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 125.

"Between 1860 and 1862 the increased growth of cotton reduced the area under cereals and raised the price of grain.... During these years Indian millet varied from 52 to 32 pounds and averaged 44 pounds."—"Nasik Gazetteer," p. 106.

This rise in prices during the sixties of the last century was due to the American war, so that between 1860 and 1862, by cheapening money and curtailing the area under cereals, the value of grain was raised. In 1863 a bad harvest forced the prices to a famine level. The American war was responsible for a brief transitory period of prosperity that was sure to be short-lived.

Turning to the revenue collections for the remaining ten years (1858-68), we find that here, as elsewhere, it progressed from Rs.5 lacs in 1858 to Rs.11 lacs at the close of 1868, with the exception of 1860 when from Rs.10 lacs it fell to Rs.9 lacs in the succeeding year. The remissions show a fluctuation throughout the period reaching its lowest level in 1863 (Rs.140) and reaching the maximum of Rs.10,910 in 1867.

Years	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees ¹⁵¹
1858-59	5,23,630	210
1859-60	9,77,680	3,370
1860-61	10,10,820	2,410
1861-62	9,29,050	1,400
1862-63	9,63,850	470
1863-64	9,90,880	140
1864-65	10,19,220	350
1865-66	10,70,150	740
1866-67	10,81,930	3,480
1867-68	11,08,470	10,910

KHANDESH

(1838-1868)

Little or no progress had been recorded in this tract of the country till 1838. Overgrown with forests, infested with tigers, ruined communications, no trade and practically depopulated, Khandesh offered in those early years of British rule (1818-1838) a spectacle of devastation and ruin.

The very first problem that faced the Government was the rehabilitation of entirely deserted villages. Between 1824 and 1839, there had been only a rise from 332,370 to 353,674 in the population, or an average yearly increase of barely half a per cent. In 1846, the total population rose to 685,619, and reached 778,112 in 1851,¹⁵² a year be-

¹⁵¹ "Nasik Gazetteer," p. 297.

*The years from 1859-60 are calculated from the figures on certain talukas from Ahmednagar and Khandesh.

¹⁵² Between 1846 and 1851 houses increased from 1,70,564 to 1,78,040; cattle from 8,87,258 to 9,26,281; carts from 36,000 to 42,787; and ploughs from 67,092 to 67,506. Bom. Gov. Rec. No. 14 of 1855, p. 240.

fore Mr. Wingate was sent in person to study the condition of Khandesh. Land administration alone was of importance in the years 1838 to 1851, since trade and communication could hardly have existed in such a backward territory.

Years	Price of Millet	Tillage in Bighas	Collections in Rupees	Remissions ¹⁵³ in Rupees
1838-39	80½	1,172,030	8,50,744	6,65,819
1839-40	102½	1,332,027	14,78,856	1,71,873
1840-41	109½	1,189,083	13,57,926	1,71,731
1841-42	94½	1,222,432	11,21,554	1,21,666
1842-43	88	1,203,382	14,80,167	67,640
1843-44	103½	1,196,056	14,70,519	37,658
1844-45	91½	1,159,803	11,56,069	3,24,469
1845-46	38	1,268,648	9,82,353	6,36,884
1846-47	114½	1,429,431	17,51,659	32,991
1847-48	171	1,466,010	17,94,280	23,792
1848-49	134	1,402,758	16,44,900	1,57,630
1849-50	85½	1,364,050	16,97,380	59,550
1850-51	150	1,356,808	16,36,218	1,39,780
1851-52	154	1,436,035	17,88,045	91,760

The fluctuation in prices throughout these years was very great. In 1839-40 millet sold at 102½ lbs. the rupee, and the collection was Rs.11,78,856 out of an estimated land revenue of Rs.15,51,032; in the succeeding year the prices again fell to 109½ lbs. the rupee, and with it the revenue also to Rs.13,57,926. In 1847-48, when the price fell to the lowest level in the fourteen years under review, the net collections showed the enormous figure of Rs.17,94,280 out of the full estimated rent of Rs.18,17,041. The prices rose to 134 lbs., and 85½ lbs. in the two years succeeding 1847, when the net collection stood with slight variation at 16 lacs; in 1851-52 the prices again fell to 154 lbs. the rupee, and when the collection ought also to have fallen, we find that it was Rs.17,88,045 with a remission of Rs.91,760, which was a small sum than the one given in 1850-51 (Rs.1,39,780).

This obviously confirms our belief that the Government, irrespective of the seasons and prices, was bent upon reaching a certain level in its land revenue collections. By the end of 1851-52, though the country was undoubtedly in a ruinous condition, the land revenue collections reached Rs.17,88,045, which was the highest figure in the fourteen years under review with the exception of the year 1847-48. But in justice it must be mentioned that the population¹⁵⁴ which was 354,674 in

¹⁵³ The population in 1839 was 3,53,674; in 1845 was 6,85,619; and in 1850 reached 7,78,112; the estimated rent of the years 1839, 1840 and 1847 were Rs 15 lacs, Rs 15 lacs and Rs 18 lacs respectively—"Khandesh Gazetteer," p. 290.

¹⁵⁴ It must be remembered that the figures given as the population are based on mere surmise, but whatever may have been the exact figures, it cannot be denied that with the restoration of order and peace the population must have increased.

1839-40, reached the figure of 778,112 in 1850-51, and this must naturally lead to an increment in tillage and land revenue; but this question of increment in tillage, which would be perhaps the only important fact for a rise in revenue, was not true when we examine the tillage area. Between 1839-40 and 1845-46, when the population rose from 153,674 to 685,619, the tillage area during that period showed a very small rise from 1,232,027 bighas in 1839 to 1,268,648 bighas in 1845. Besides, between 1839 and 1845, the tillage area showed a continuous fluctuation, reaching the lowest figure in those seven years in 1843, when the area fell to 1,159,803 bighas. In the years succeeding 1845-46, when the population reached the level of 778,112 in 1850-51, we find that, though the land revenue had increased from Rs.16 lacs in 1843 to Rs.17 lacs in 1851, the tillage area had continually fallen from 1,466,010 bighas in 1847-48 to 1,356,803 in 1850-51. This reveals that the Government realisations of revenue did not take into consideration the fall in prices and the tillage area. This attaches a lesser responsibility to the Maratha misrule on the advent of Captain Wingate in Khandesh¹⁵⁵ in 1852.

Let us now follow Captain Wingate to Khandesh and learn from his report¹⁵⁶ its condition on the eve of the new survey.

The fall of rain throughout Khandesh was probably less than in the Southern Maratha Country, and little, if at all, greater than in the Deccan. The soil of Khandesh was more fertile and yielded heavier crops than that of the Deccan, or the Southern Maratha Country. This was due possibly, to some peculiarity of climate and the soil being less exhausted by long continued cultivation. The principal crops of Khandesh were the same as those of the Deccan, and the modes of husbandry did not differ materially.

Irrigation was extensively practised. The valleys were open and level, and the smaller rivers, taking their rise in the Western Ghauts, flowed in shallow beds which were obstructed here and there by ledges of hard rock. These rocks acted as natural dams, and afforded great facilities for the construction of masonry dams for diverting the river water into the canals for irrigation. The irrigated husbandry was,

¹⁵⁵ "Compared with other parts of the Presidency, however, the country was still backward with a sparse population and large tracts of arable land lying waste. Captain Wingate was accordingly deputed in 1852 to report on a suitable plan for introducing the survey into Khandesh."—"Land Revenue of Bombay," A. Rogers, p. 289.

¹⁵⁶ Report of May 19, 1852 (George Wingate.)

however, of subordinate importance to that of the dry crops. Goor (coarse sugar) and opium were the chief exports belonging to the former, whereas all great exports of Khandesh—cotton, oil-seeds, wheat and gram and formerly indigo—belonged to the latter, though wheat and gram were also grown to some extent on irrigated lands. The early monsoon crops were those to which belonged the dry crop exports like wheat, gram and linseed. Wheat and gram had been replaced by cotton, owing to the comparatively large demand for the latter crop.

The extent of cultivation was very limited in 1852. On entering the District from almost any quarter, the country appeared to be covered with low, scattered bush jungle. These thorny bushes did not grow close together, but formed, here and there, dense and almost impervious thickets, making the entire landscape a sober monotonous jungle in every direction. It was only around villages in thinly populated parts that the fields were in continuous cultivation as the facility for manuring and bringing home the crops made such lands more valuable than those at a greater distance.

The talukas of Sowda, Yawul, parts of Chopra, Nusserabad, Erundole and Amulneir, situated on the fine rich plain of the Tapti, were cleared of jungle and cultivated. They were the most thickly populated and richest part of the Collectorate that looked at all like the old country. All the rest had the look of a newly peopled colony. If we accepted the mango and tamarind trees and the many ruined wells as evidences of former industry, they were a sufficient testimony to the former prosperity of Khandesh. Excepting the well-cultivated portion of the Tapti plain, the whole of Khandesh in 1852 may be viewed as only very partially reclaimed from a state of nature. The population was wholly inadequate to occupy the entire Collectorate, and it was feared that it would not be sufficient for that purpose for even a century to come. On the advent of George Wingate, the population was 7,85,091 souls, 13,56,631 bighas were under cultivation, and there was a net collection of Rs 17,04,392¹⁵⁷

Five-sixths of the arable land lying waste was very fertile and suitable for the growth of exportable products such as cotton, oil seeds, etc. If these products were exported to Bombay and other markets where their consumption was great, neither would the prices fall nor the markets be glutted in Khandesh. But to convert these wastes into

¹⁵⁷ For the details see the Report in "Letters on Economic Conditions, (1818-1826)."'

cultivated lands required a much larger population than the one Khandesh possessed in the fifties of the last century. The soil could easily support a population of 2 to 3 millions, but the District contained at the most 760,000 souls. Mr. Wingate was of the opinion that Government should do all within its power to make the present settlers comfortable and, by offering encouraging terms, attract an inflow of larger numbers.¹⁵⁸

The ryots were in better circumstances in Khandesh than those of the Deccan. They possessed a number of cattle, which cost them little, owing to the abundance of free pasturage. This facility provided a sufficient number of bullocks for agricultural purposes. Besides, light, two-bullock carts were to be found in great numbers in almost all the villages. In addition to these, the wealthier cultivators and traders generally had light pleasure carts in which they drove to the market or wherever they had occasion to go.

Even during these early years a vast traffic passed through the District to Bombay, and the improvement of the Tul and Chandore Ghauts brought greater employment to the people in Khandesh. Independent of agriculture, nearly all the carts that brought down cotton and grain from Berar and Khandesh to Bhewndy, belonged to the cultivators in Khandesh. As soon as the harvest was over, the ryots either from Khangaon in Berar, or from home, looked about for a fare to Bhewndy, from where they seldom returned with their carts empty. The time would come, it was said, when the entire traffic would be appropriated by the ryots of Khandesh from the Bumjaries, when the thoroughly execrable road from the Tul Ghaut would be superseded by a road as good as the one that had been constructed down the Ghaut itself. There was, besides, abundant money in Khandesh, a fact that could be testified to by the cash payment for all labour.

Captain Wingate's mode of survey and his proposal for the incre-

¹⁵⁸ "53rd Both these objects will be promoted by the imposition of very moderate assessment on the land at the new settlement I should say it would be difficult to err on the side of liberality...for, with its millions of waste acres, capable of raising exportable products, there is ample room for the revenue to recover itself.. Population is already becoming redundant in parts of the Deccan and low rates in Khandesh would probably bring settlers from it, and from the Nizam's districts in considerable numbers. The Collectorate of Rutnagerry is oppressed by an over numerous and starving, but highly industrious population, and could means be devised for systematically drafting of the excess to re-establish the deserted villages of Khandesh, Government might unhesitatingly venture to incur a considerable expenditure for this purpose in the prospect of a most ample return.."—Report of May 1855.

ment of the population were accepted by the Government.¹⁵⁹ By January of 1853 the survey commenced its operation in upwards of twenty villages of Sowda, Yawul and Chopra talukas.¹⁶⁰ Captain Wingate soon after left for England, and the work continued to its close in 1865 when the whole Collectorate was surveyed. It would be well to follow the survey and glean a little more information on conditions prevalent in a few of the talukas.

Turning to Amulneir, the principal articles brought for sale to its markets of Beheada, Bahadurpur, Varsi and Shirlla, were typical of this tract of country. The articles brought for sale were grain, coarse woollen and cotton cloth, spices, vegetables, fruits and sometimes live stock such as buffaloes, cows, sheep and goats from Berai and Nagpur. The prevailing crop of the taluka was bajri. Nundurbar was bare of trees, and ill-supplied with water. The local stock though fit for agricultural work was poor; the population was not more than 80 to a square mile, chiefly consisting of husbandmen and a few artisans. There were only two good roads, one from Dhulia to Surat, and the other from Taloda to Nundurbar. There were no manufactures of consequence. The new railway had favoured many of the talukas through which it traversed, especially Lohara, which had three principal stations of Pachora, Mhyji and Mussawud within its reach¹⁶¹. Warrungauam was typical of Khandesh's deserted condition, for it had within its own limits no less than fifty deserted villages. All survey reports¹⁶² were unanimous in their opinion that the past revenue collections had weighed heavily on the people. Though the over-assessment of the late Government was responsible for the ruination of Khandesh, there can be hardly any excuse for the new Government to have continued that extortion for a further period of thirty years, even after their much vaunted peace and order had been established.

The years prior to 1852 were, both in communications and trade, hardly of any importance. The early years of Maratha mismanagement had destroyed all trade. There were no main roads. The tracks were poorly made and deficient in comfort. Few and far between were

¹⁵⁹"12th To Captain Wingate the best thanks of Government are due for his exertion in furtherance of the object for which at his own suggestion he was deputed to Khandesh, and for the valuable Paper in which the results of his investigation are placed before the President-in-Council"—Govt Resolution of May 7, 1852.

¹⁶⁰Letter No. 17 of January 5, 1853

¹⁶¹Sel. Rec. Bom. Govt of October 11, 1865.

¹⁶²Letter No. 501 of May 23, 1870; Resolution No. 951 of March 9, 1860

miserable groups of huts, and the mountain passes were as rugged and formidable as their fierce possessors—the Bheels.¹⁶³ About this time a brisk trade in cotton export by pack bullocks and carts was in progress; but the long journeys were very trying, especially below the Syhadri Hills where many cattle died, or were injured for life.¹⁶⁴ This testifies to the wretched condition of the roads. But in 1852 the opening of the railway helped trade in Khandesh to greatly change and develop. Khandesh had already been noted as the home of opium, but in 1856, by the order of the Government of India, the Dhulia factory was closed and the poppy cultivation stopped. During the twenty years ending in 1856, the greatest area cultivated in one year was 2,380 acres, which had yielded 28.203 lbs. the acre.¹⁶⁵

It now remains to learn the progress of the prices, tillage and revenue collections during the introduction of the new survey.

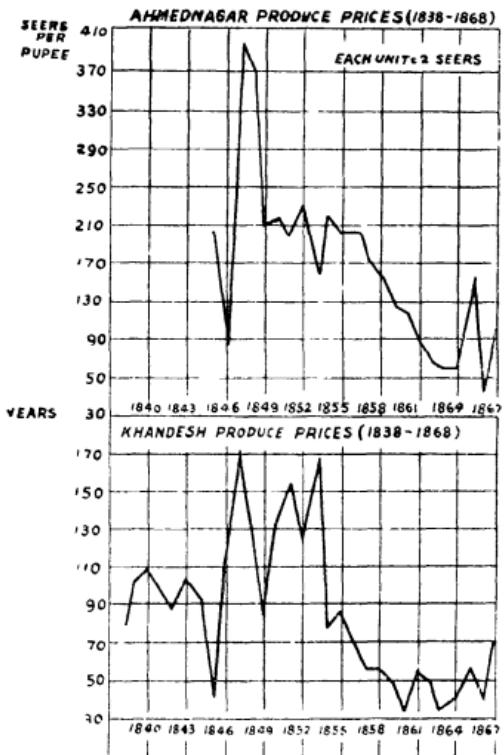
Years	Price (Millet)	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees	Remissions in Rupees
1852-53	121	1,171,237	19,55,771	13,442
1853-54	168	1,198,785	17,17,606	1,47,767
1854-55	76	1,286,334	19,92,812	15,818
1855-56	81	1,294,644	11,12,223	4,63,905
1856-57	72	1,363,813	19,92,726	23,838
1857-58	56	1,443,832	19,18,618	58,297
1858-59	56	1,574,222	20,84,812	62,375
1859-60	48	1,624,980	22,17,127	52,179

The years 1852-53 and 1853-54 both show ruinous prices at 121 lbs and 168 lbs the rupee for millet; but from 1854, with the exception of the year succeeding, the prices rose reaching 48 lbs the rupee in 1859. The tillage showed a continuous rise throughout the eight years. Though the collections fell in 1855-56 to Rs 11 lacs from Rs 19 lacs in 1854-55, the succeeding year (1856-57) touched Rs 19 lacs and increased to reach Rs 22 lacs by 1859-60. The rise in tillage was an indication of an increase in population, even taking into consideration the fact that many alienated villages might have augmented Government lands during the years under review.

¹⁶³ The Deccan Commissioner's records (1818-1826) possess many documents which are a testimony to the terror and rapine the Bheels carried out in Khandesh and its environs. The misery and desertion in Khandesh in those early years were not a little responsible for the activity of this fierce tribe.

¹⁶⁴ Bom. Gov. Sel No. LXCHI, p. 29

¹⁶⁵ Letter No. 910 of May 19, 1866



Years	Price (Millet)	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees	Remissions ¹⁶⁶ in Rupees
1860-61	32	1,814,289	21,12,664	1,22,616
1861-62	52	1,896,831	25,07,003	19,019
1862-63	48	2,084,869	25,85,749	27,088
1863-64	35	2,336,112	27,63,009	50,865
1864-65	42	2,431,579	29,09,267	99,861
1865-66	56	2,471,186	31,66,598	75,853
1866-67	42	2,518,549	32,69,516	34,915
1867-68	70	2,601,065	32,12,117	14,856

In the remaining eight years (1860-68) we find the price of millet steadier. Although there were some fluctuations, yet the fall did not reach the level of 171 lbs., 168 lbs., or 124 lbs. the rupee, as it did in the years prior to 1852. There was a continuous rise in the tillage with a corresponding rise in the net collections which saw a slight fall at the close of our period (1867-68). No impartial critic can deny that there was a definite improvement in the condition of Khandesh since Captain Wingate's report of 1852.

This review of the thirty years (1833-1863) has shown us the progress in trade, communications and land administration in the Bombay Deccan, but its success is to be viewed in the light of future experience and progress. The Deccan riots of 1875, which were separated from the period of our review by only seven years, afford testimony that whatever prosperity appeared to have dawned with the new survey and its great architect, was but fleeting and ephemeral.

a is taken from seasonal reports in the "Gazetteer," p. 98. The calculated by subtracting the remissions and outstandings from

CHAPTER V

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

ELPHINSTONE had guessed the population of the conquered territories to be about 40,00,000; his successor, Chaplin, by a comparison of revenues of the excluded portion of the country with those of British possession, had framed an estimate which he thought would be found nearer the truth. As Kholapur was not included, it corresponded with Elphinstone's estimate of four millions.¹

	Souls
Poona	4,84,717
Nuggur	6,50,000
Khandesh	4,17,976
Dharwar	<u>6,84,193</u>
	22,36,886
Southern Jagirs	7,78,183
Sattara	<u>7,36,284</u>
	37,51,353

The number of Government villages, as calculated by Chaplin, were 7,229, the number of alienated villages as jagirs, surinjams, etc., were 2,252; so that the proportion of alienated to Government was about 1 to 3 1/5.² Colonel Sykes, in his evidence in 1832, which was fourteen years after British occupation, estimated the population of the four collectorates, the Raja of Sattara's and the Southern Jagirdar's states as about 32,85,985.³ These figures show a distinct decrease in the population brought about by poverty, famine and disease, so amply testified to by the conditions prevailing in those early years of British administration. The wide-spread poverty, the failure of harvests due to scarcity of rain, the heavy assessment, the fall in prices of grain due to the increasing cultivation, and the lack of demand for home industry like cotton cloth, which fetched a subsistence to the ryot in years of scarcity, all contributed to the rapid decline in the ryot's economic condition.

In the Bombay Deccan, as elsewhere in India, a conglomeration of people constituted the population of the conquered territory. The Marathas, who were the cultivators of the soil, contributed from 69 to

¹ Mr. Chaplin's Report of 1822, p 3

² Ibid

³ Evidence before the Select Committee, 1832, p 158.

74½% of the whole population of the collectorates.⁴ The remainder consisted of Mussulmans, Brahmins and Rajputs. The Brahmins varied from 4½% in Dharwar to 11½% in Poona, the Rajputs from a half per cent in Poona to 3½% in Khandesh, and the Mussulmans from 4 1/3% in Poona to 8½% in Dhaiwar.⁵

The opinion of the Collectors and the Commissioner regarding the character of the Brahmins was very unfavourable. The Brahmins, who had so long conducted the Government of the country, were stigmatised by Mr. Chaplin as an "intriguing, lying, corrupt, licentious and unprincipled race of people." With this notion of the leading race in Maharashtra, there could be little hope of conciliation between the conquered and the conqueror. Elphinstone, though condemning his former antagonists, had the generosity to state that "there were amongst them many instances of decent and respectable lives, and although they are generally subtle and insincere, I have met with some on whom I could depend for sound and candid opinion."⁶ It has been the good fortune of Britain, that even in spite of the most strongly supported of opinions, she has always produced critics who have had the courage to tell their countrymen what they believe to be the truth. The able and eminent Henry Tucker, Director of the East India Company, spoke in defence of the Brahmins thus: "Moreover, it is in my opinion unjust to condemn this people indiscriminately. Among the Brahmins are to be found men of simplicity and purity of life and manners scarcely to be surpassed by genuine professors of Christianity in its purest form; and even the errors of such men deserve to be treated with tenderness and forbearance."⁷ Their only error, if it could at all be called one, was their desire to maintain their power.

These were the opinions formed of those who were at the Court of the Peshwa and attached to his Government, but those "unconnected with the Court and army bear a much better character; being sober, industrious and encouragers of agriculture," wrote Elphinstone. In another place, the able Commissioner was of opinion that "it must indeed be remembered both of this class and the Brahmins, that we see the worst of the whole, and that it is among those at a distance from the seat of Government that we are to look for any virtue that may exist in a nation."

⁴ Evidence before the Select Committee, 1832, p 158

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "Territories Conquered From the Peshwa," Elphinstone, p. 8

⁷ "Memorials of Indian Government," Tucker, p. 480

The ryotwari system was introduced with the hope of bringing the ryot more in contact with the administrators. But this system could only be successful if those who governed understood the language of the people. Few Englishmen of those days succeeded in acquiring an accurate knowledge of languages which was so essential to the due discharge of justice and revenue; and few still possessed that knowledge of manners and habits which was necessary to enable them to enter into the feelings of the people, to understand their character, to appreciate their motives, and to deduce the true value of their evidence.⁸ The older English administrators were conscious of the notion of superiority that young Englishmen had when they came out to India. Chaplin was of the opinion that a humble code of some kind, as a sort of manual, should be given to every one newly arrived from England. The motto of it was to be in the words of Shakespeare:

"O! But man proud man!—
Drest in little brief authority
Most ignorant of what he is most assured,
His glassy essence
Plays such fantastic tricks before High Heaven
As makes angels weep."

The native subordinates were often blamed for the mismanagement of a Government scheme, or for being susceptible to bribery and corruption. It was an easy matter to feel indignant at the bribery and corruption of the poor people with low education, low pay, and practically no prospects.⁹ The position of these subordinates in the hierarchy of the Company's servants, was indeed very low. Whatever position they might expect to reach, could only be gained by doing everything to please their new masters. The moral effect of this loss of position might be expressed in Chaplin's words: "Almost every laudable object of ambition, except that of obtaining the office of a mamlutdar or dufturdar, is placed beyond the reach of the better classes, and the effect may probably be to induce habits of idleness and dissipation."¹⁰ All places of trust and honour "must be filled by Europeans"¹¹ was the rooted idea of Elphinstone and a few of his successors. To Elphinstone "the society of natives can never be in itself agreeable, no man can long converse with the generality of them, without being provoked with their constant selfishness and design, wearied with their

⁸ "Memorials of Indian Government," Tucker, p. 482.

⁹ "Dadabhoj Naoroji," R. P. Masani, p. 105.

¹⁰ Chaplin's Report, 1822, p. 88.

¹¹ Elphinstone's Report, 1819, p. 60.

opportunities and disgusted with their flattery."¹² Elphinstone must have come across the low class of Marathas to have formed that opinion. The honourable and trustworthy servants of the late Government could not have associated with these foreigners on their advent. It is a matter of regret that a man like Elphinstone should hold a few castaways from a disintegrating society as examples of the generality of people.

But it must be asserted in justice that administrative failure of these early years was partly due to the Indian subordinates. They were a constant source of trouble, and were often found oppressing the ryots. "Your remarks on the dishonesty of village officials and native servants," wrote Chaplin to Robertson, "are unfortunately too true. I think this, added to the lack of revenue details, an evil of greater prevalence in the Dekhan than in any other country, and to this cause I ascribe the circumstance of the ryotwar system being less efficient in practice here than in some of our old provinces."¹³ On another occasion, Captain Pottinger of Ahmednagar, gave an example of financial fraud committed by native officials. "In some instances, the sum in a single village has exceeded 500 rupees, and in others from 100 to 400. Two are under 100 rupees and the money has been actually collected from the ryots, which rendered the conduct of hereditary officers still more reprehensible."¹⁴ In the same letter Pottinger further added that "in one village, in the district Jamkheir, the Patail had exercised great cruelties by putting stones on the ryots' heads and breasts and tying them down to stakes in the sun, to force them to pay their dues," and when the money was realised, "he attempted to defraud the Government out of above 500 rupees or one third of the village revenues."¹⁵ These men who came into power on the collapse of the Maratha Government, or who may have acquired important positions during the lax rule of the last Peshwa, were responsible for giving their new masters the false idea that the whole Maratha administration had been corrupt from time immemorial.

Now let us turn to the attitude of the conquerors toward their native subjects. We have already shown the ignorance of the Europeans regarding the language, morals and manners of the people, but these short-comings could be overcome by constant contact with the governed, and not by

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Letter No 7944 of June 5, 1824

¹⁴ Letter No 111 of July 17, 1818

¹⁵ Ibid.

aloofness and arrogance, which a major part of the official department adopted. It must be said in justification of English character, that when such conduct was brought home to the superiors, a reprimand, or at times an appeal, to the junior officials was never lost. Thus, when Captain Robertson learnt of the bad treatment given to some villagers by the military officers, he wrote as follows to Mr Chaplin:

"The best regulation will perhaps be found defective until European gentlemen (which I am sorry to remark is not the case) learn to consider an Indian as being as much entitled to his own property . . . as English are

"They travel over the land with the most perfect conviction that everybody and everything in it was made for their use, and liable to be used as their servants and property. I should hope that it is not impossible to cause the moral feeling of Englishmen to burn as warmly in favour of their Indian subjects, as no doubt it does in regard to Englishmen, and I conceive that as their conduct does not proceed from want of principle, but merely from a too dignified opinion of themselves and their own nation, a strong appeal to their good sense, and which should also excite their compassion in favour of the poorer classes who inhabit villages, would have more effect than the most restrictive or best regulation . ."¹⁶ In spite of these repeated appeals, there is ample evidence¹⁷ to show that British officials disregarded the orders of their senior officers, and on several occasions illtreated the villagers

Mr. Chaplin in his circular (1823) to the Collectors, was of the opinion that young men of little experience were apt to think "too much

¹⁶ Letter No. 686 of May 14, 1820

¹⁷ See the section on Transport in 'Letters on 1818-1825.'

Letter No. 821 of 1823 from Mr. Thackeray is a giving a defence against the charges of one Captain Grafton, who was at the head of a party of surveyors. The complaint of Captain Grafton was that no proper food supplies were given to the party, and Mr. Thackeray refuted this charge on the ground that his personal experience and the inquiries since made led him to assert that the charges of Captain Grafton were false, and it at all there was any misunderstanding, the servants of the Captain and his other European subordinates were to blame. Mr. Thackeray forwarded the complaint of his manluttadar against Captain Grafton, Lieutenants Le Messureens, Boyd and Campbell, which stated "Although things were supplied, they maltreated the Patel Moodkappa and made him stand in the sun taking away the lottah in which milk had been brought . . ." Accompanying this complaint, the inamllutdar sent a list of the articles supplied to each of those four European gentlemen. The articles were milk, butter, firewood, 4 fowls, 18 eggs, arrack, 125 bundles of kurbee, cocoanuts and earthen pots

of themselves, and very little of the natives." His experience had shown him that such assumption of superiority often led to a haughty and supercilious demeanour, "extremely offensive to all classes and productive of great injury to public service."¹⁸ The Commissioner was certain that the majority of educated Englishmen soon realised that they would never be able to manage the important branches of the services in India, without the aid of intelligent Indians. He was convinced that nothing "would reconcile the higher classes of natives to the change of ruler than an unreserved personal intercourse with them," and a sympathetic attention to ceremonials on which the Indians laid such emphasis and importance. This advice was followed up with a warning that they had only "to look back to history to find various instances in which revolutions have been brought about by discontent engendered by less considerable causes."

This toleration became all the more requisite, in Chaplin's opinion, when they considered the relations that were likely to subsist between them as foreigners, and the Marathas as a conquered people. It must not be forgotten by Englishmen that notwithstanding their wish to conciliate the people, their rule would still be felt "as irksome if not degrading." "Our own interests, if not those of humanity," wrote Chaplin, "should dictate to us the propriety of contributing all we can toward maintaining that empire of opinion, which, as far as respects our power, our justice and our moderation, is acknowledged to be the main support of our administration."

These wise precepts could be practised in spite of so many peculiarities of native character, which so often stood as an insuperable bar to any cordial interchange of sentiments, wrote the Commissioner, provided the motives were sufficiently strong, and every individual was conscious that it was in the power of everyone to govern his temper. The acceptance of this advice by the majority of the English administrators contributed to reconciling the conquered people to the new rule. It was this sense of justice, born of political necessity and wisdom, that enabled a body of men so foreign to the soil, to win over a people and lead them to the path of political peace, if not of economic freedom.

From evidence given by men of position on retirement from the Company's services in India before the Parliamentary Committees in England, they were with few exceptions always of the opinion that the Indian servants of the Company were invariably well-fitted for their

¹⁸ Circular No. 6609 of May 28, 1823.

duties. Asked if those employed in the Company's revenue department could discharge their functions efficiently, the reply was in the affirmative.¹⁹ In very few instances the officials stated that the natives were incapable of governing, if given an opportunity to do so.

In 1822, Chaplin was of the opinion that there was a universal tone of satisfaction among the ryots, resulting from the improvement in their condition.²⁰ Captain Grant also bore testimony to this ameliorated condition; and according to him the ryots were sensible of the superiority of the new mode of administering revenue. Yet, in spite of these signs of improvement, by 1832 the revenue had diminished considerably.²¹ From 1822 to 1827 the entire revenue diminished by Rs.5,33,399, in Ahmednagar in 1827-28, it fell by Rs.4,15,000 and in Poona by Rs 3,60,025, which was on the whole equivalent to "15 and 16 decimal per cent of the revenue of 1822."

This deterioration in the condition of the ryot and progressive poverty has already been described. It now remains to note how far the cultivator, by his weakness or peculiarities, contributed to these misfortunes in his life. "The Maratha peasantry," wrote Elphinstone, "are sober, frugal, industrious, mild and inoffensive to everybody—and among themselves neither dishonest nor insincere. The faults of their Government have created in them corresponding vices, its oppression and extortion have taught them dissimulation, mendacity and fraud, and the insecurity of the property has rendered them so careless of the future as to lavish on a marriage or other ceremony the savings of years of parsimony."²² The ryots, embarrassed by debts, very seldom extricated themselves. His exertions to rid himself of his debts could be compared, according to Chaplin, "to the hellish torments of Sisyphus who had no sooner rolled his burden to the summit of the hill than it fell back on him with redoubled violence."²³ Years later, to one Colonel Prescott,²⁴ a superintendent of the new land survey, the progressive poverty was due to the fact that even "if the ryot was a richer man tomorrow," Prescott was sure that "no real advantage would accrue to him," just because the ryot did not know how "to go about bettering his condition." In times of plenty, when he ought to

¹⁹ Evidence before the Select Committee, Vol III, p 969

²⁰ Chaplin's Report of 1822, p. 106

²¹ "East India Papers, 1832," p 176

²² "Territories Conquered From the Peshwa," Elphinstone, p. 9

²³ Chaplin's Report of 1822, p. 105

²⁴ The letter found at the Land Records Office was in a very bad condition and had no date or number

build a substantial house, sink a well or two, increase his agricultural implements, and endeavour to improve his farm, the cultivator, according to Prescott, spent Rs.500 on a marriage feast which he could have easily disposed of at Rs.50. "His family, great and small, would be covered with ornaments, his home would be filled with copper pots, and instead of trudging on his feet... we should see him mounted on a Bheemthuri tatto riding... about the country, neglecting his business for the pleasure of gossip in all the neighbouring villages". If he had more money to waste, then it would go to the crafty "baniah," wrote Prescott, "those unscrupulous usurers... a set of sordid and mercenary wretches, the like of whom cannot be found in any civilized country."²⁵ To Prescott, as to Elphinstone and Chaplin, the main cause for this indebtedness was the marriage feast.

We thus learn that the blame for continued poverty was placed at the door of the village bania and the marriage feast. The Deccan Riot Commission (1875) tried to disprove the marriage ceremony as an important cause for plunging the cultivator into years of untold misery. Undue prominence had been given, according to the Commission, to marriages as the cause of indebtedness. The expenditure might have been extravagant, looking to the ryot's means, but the occasion was seldom, and the total sum spent was not larger than what the ryot was justified in spending on social and domestic pleasures. "The expenditure by itself rarely appears as a nucleus of his indebtedness... the constantly recurring small item of debt for food and other necessaries, for seeds, for bullocks, for the Government assessment, do more to swell the indebtedness of the ryot than an occasional marriage."

The money-lender only came in, thought the early administrators, due to the marriage feasts. Money-lending has existed in India as in other countries, but in pre-British days there were two restraints on the money-lenders; firstly, the existence of vigorous village communities, and secondly, the apathy of the State toward the recovery of loans; a function that was entrusted to the village punchayets. It was the disintegration of the village communities that gave the sawkars and land grabbers their opportunity to exploit the ryot. The ignorant cultivator who neither knew how to read nor write, who had no business habits, and whom the law under the new Government placed at the mercy of a

²⁵ Prescott then discussed a maximum rate of interest suggesting 25 per cent which would protect the ryot from so high a rate as 40 or 50 per cent then charged by the bania. "The effects of it would be to curtail the enormous and frivolous expenditure at the marriage feast, and eventually to break the custom altogether."

set of sordid and heartless wretches, the like of whom were difficult to find anywhere. The judiciary to make matters worse followed the line of least resistance, and favoured a rigid and literal application of the law without attempting to go beyond the ryot's bond. In spite of the many inherently bad traits in the character of the sawkars, they were at times indispensable to our social organisation as it then stood. He shared the weaknesses and virtues of ordinary human beings and the risks which the sawkar undertook, due to the "ignorance, improvidence and irregularity of the cultivators," accounted for the "calling forth of his weakness more than his virtue into action" "To censure him is to censure the imperfections of mankind." The sawkar served the villages in a variety of ways other than as suppliers of credit. He was also the grain dealer, and in this capacity useful in times of famine and drought when he issued grain and helped the village to tide over difficult times. If he kept his greed in check, he was a pillar of strength to the village organisation, and the main financial support of the fabric which had for its foundation land and labour without the necessary wealth.

The repercussions of the new rule were also felt in the banking and mercantile world, especially as regards exchange. The condition of the sawkars had in consequence much deteriorated; "it being computed that not two-thirds of their former capital are now employed in banking and speculation."²⁶ This depression was somewhat due to the disappearance of the Court with its demand "of jewels, shawls and cloths and diverse valuable commodities" no longer required. The native army had diminished in numbers, and in consequence the demand on consumption had greatly reduced, and this was naturally followed by a decline of commercial prosperity. Besides these changes, the departure of Jagirdars and Surinjamedars from the capital was an added reason for the fall in the profits of the merchants—to augment this misfortune was added the despair of never realising the great debts²⁷ from this fallen aristocracy. In spite of these monetary mishaps, the sawkars were better off than the ryots on account of the immunity which they had enjoyed from many taxes which the ryots had to pay. With the lessening of the cesses, the wealthier class had less to pay the State than the ryot on whom the burden increased when the Government, to make up its loss, laid a heavier taxation on land.

"The people are few," wrote Elphinstone. "compared to the arable land, they are hardy, warlike and always armed till of late years; the

²⁶ Chaplin's Report of 1822, p. 108.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 111.

situation of the lower order was very comfortable, and that of the upper classes prosperous. There was abundance of employment in the domestic establishment and foreign conquest of the nation.”²⁸ Thus, we have the testimony of prosperity among the Maratha people on the advent of the British from Elphinstone himself. The police were also good, wrote Elphinstone, which shows that the Maratha Government, even in its last days, was not quite the picture of anarchy as painted by the foreigners; he further added that, on the whole, murder and robbery were very rare, and he had never heard any complaint of insecurity of property.²⁹ Elphinstone had been greatly impressed with the indigenous system of village “watch and ward.”

With the progress of time and change in circumstances, it was impossible for the English to continue the system of Maratha justice and administration. Even the first commissioner was compelled to make reforms which he did with scrupulous regard for native sentiments and prejudices.³⁰ The Patel was permitted only as much authority as would preserve his influence in his village. The powers of the mamludars were at first limited to a fine of Rs.2 and confinement of 24 hours, but afterwards augmented to allow of punishing a petty affray. “All other criminal jurisdiction short of capital punishment was vested in the Collector.”³¹

Like the miras, the village punchayet was a time-honoured institution, responsible for the village independence from the central control. Elphinstone had been strongly in their favour, and looked upon them as the “principal instrument” which “must continue to be exempt from all new forms of interference and regulation on our part.”³² They afford a strong parallel to the Shire Courts of Saxon England, and if they had been allowed to continue in their old vigour, a great stride to independence in village life might have been realised.

We cannot deny that the punchayet had many obvious faults—“dilatoriness, want of executive power, exposure to corruption and inability to deal with complicated issues”;³³ but in Elphinstone’s opinion “these faults were outweighed by greater advantages, especially for the decision of petty disputes” and above all it enlisted the interest of the

²⁸ “Territories Conquered From the Peshwa,” Elphinstone, p. 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

³⁰ “Life of Elphinstone,” Cotton, p. 139.

³¹ “Life of Elphinstone,” Colebrooke, p. 144.

³² Elphinstone’s Report of 1819, p. 60.

³³ “Life of Elphinstone,” Cotton, p. 151

people in the protection of their own rights.³⁴ The punchayets appeared to have continued even after the corrupt reign of Baji Rao, and retained in a great degree the confidence of the people; "they did not appear to have been unworthy of their good opinion."³⁵ Elphinstone further wrote that all answers to his queries (except that of one Collector) gave the punchayets a very favourable character; and Chaplin, in particular, was of the opinion that in most instances "their statement of evidence is succinct and clear, their reasoning on it solid and perspicuous, and their decision just and impartial."

Elphinstone then decided without hesitation in favour of maintaining the system of punchayet. His innovations aimed at reviving the vigour and removing the abuses of the native system, while, at the same time, preserving all its main features. He was also of the opinion that some pressure might be put upon its members to induce them to attend, and perhaps their attendance might be rewarded with a small fee.

It is true that, with the changing circumstances, it was impossible to maintain the Maratha system of administration, but many of the innovations were against self-help and independence, and the changes in method of administration were sometimes prompted by narrow and selfish motives. Doubts had occurred to some of the ablest of English administrators as to how far British rule had been ultimately beneficial to the people subject to it. They had undeniably given to India the inestimable blessing of peace, restored order, and checked the rapine that wasted our Provinces; but the attempt to administer justice, to protect property, and to establish fixed principles of revenue administration, had in many cases been "attended with such lamentable failures" as to constitute a scandal to their Government.³⁶

³⁴ "The institution of the Punchayet was a restraint on patronage and bribery.... The intimate acquaintance of the members with the subject in dispute, and in many cases with the character of the party, must have made their decision frequently correct; and it was an advantage of incalculable value in this mode of trial that the judges, being drawn from the body of the people, could act on no principles that were generally not understood, a circumstance, which by preventing uncertainty and obscurity in law, struck at the root of litigation...."—"Life of Elphinstone" (Rulers of India Series), p. 152.

³⁵ "Life of Elphinstone," Cotton, p. 153.

³⁶ "Upon the whole, do you conceive that the effect of our Government has been beneficial to the people?—I conceive it has certainly been beneficial. . . We have put a stop to all external invasion and to all open violence within our own territory; and we have introduced a regular system of justice and a Government on fixed and rational principles, all of which are great benefits conferred on the natives; but no doubt the introduction of our Government has been attended with a great many evils.... It tends very much to level all ranks, it withdraws a good deal of the encouragement that there was to

"Left to itself, the East India Company has not well and wisely governed the territory which it holds. Where are the fruits of an enlightened Government in India? Are the people there industrious, happy and contented? And is material prosperity indicating the success which attends honest labour under a wise rule? Do the courts of law secure impartial justice to the wronged and innocent? Have public works been founded for the convenience and comfort of all, as monuments of the beneficence of the rulers, or as proofs that the accumulation of capital and industry has been invested to promote present and future progress and improvement? In India such imaginary evidence is fictitious. Docks, quays, common roads, railroads, canals and the ministering agents of civilization are almost unknown. The peasantry of India are depressed, if not neglected"³⁷ These queries of 1853 by Thomas Bazley,³⁸ President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, still remain to be answered long after the curtain has been rung down on the East India Company. Even though Bazley's condemnation of the honourable Company cannot be accepted entirely since it was based upon a commercial rivalry,³⁹ yet no impartial critic can deny that the material condition of the people, then as now, was anything to evoke satisfaction. The ryot who constitute the mainstay of the Deccan, expressed his feelings to a witness: "If we improve the land, you will raise the rent; how do we know you will leave us any more than you do now, and why should we go to any more trouble for you?" With such a defeatist attitude, accompanied with the greed for progressive revenue on the part of the Company, there was little initiative left in the Deccan Kumbi to strive to better his lot. The remaining ten years (1858-1868) of our narrative had little to show by way of substantial gain, if not by way of bright hopes.

learning, and to excellence of all sorts; and also the destruction of the higher class of natives, it has diminished the demands for Indian manufactures; the Europeans, who supply their place, making use chiefly of articles of their own country...."—Elphinstone, "East India Papers, 1830," p. 157.

³⁷ "Western India," edited by James Robertson, p. viii

³⁸ In the preface to "Western India"

³⁹ "Indignant at the contumely bestowed upon the people of India and upon commerce and industry of Britain, the Chamber of Commerce, Manchester,...determined to send a competent individual as their representative Commissioner," wrote Bazley. Alexander Mackay was the Commissioner sent to Western India to study the possibility of the growth of more cotton, a step much disliked by the Company.

CHAPTER VI

COMMUNICATIONS—PART I

THE physical features of a territory vitally influence the means of communication. Mahārāstra, with its rugged landscape, offered untold difficulties to the development of roads, especially from east to west. The formidable and ponderous range of mountains that stretched all along the coast like a natural fortification, with its narrow and precipitous passes, made the construction of roads to the coast a matter of great expense and untold labour. These ghauts are not remarkable for their height, but are peculiarly wild, rugged, and at times barren. Moreover, there is too much sheer cliff and impassable ravine in their structure, and the paths that lead over them to the coast few and difficult, winding at the bottom of beetling crags or climbing precipitous gorges in their tortuous course. Deep, narrow gorges, torn open by some convulsion of nature, sunder apparently continuous lines of crest. Leaving aside these break-neck paths to the Concan, even in the districts below the ghauts, the physical features made communication between the villages the caprice of fair weather only.¹ Communication on the advent of the British was devoid of all system and regularity. Writing on coastal communications, Mackay was of the opinion that no matter from what part of the Deccan the produce might come, at some point or other it must make a plunge "from the high to the low country, a plunge averaging 2,000 feet."

The incentive toward the development of communications in the Bombay Deccan, at the commencement of British rule, was at first the result of military necessity rather than the promotion of trade. This attitude toward the construction of roads continued for quite a long time.² Under the late Government, the advantages of good communications

¹ "These ghauts mainly ran from south to north and stood as a barrier between the Deccan communications with the coast, and there were, besides, lateral spurs of the ghauts which they threw eastwards far into the interior making communications from Poona to Dharwar all the more difficult"—"Western India," A. Mackay, p. 375.

² "It is not my purpose to show that there are no made roads in the Deccan... Roads have been made in the Deccan, and considerable sums expended in their construction, but to what purpose? They have been projected, planned and executed with a view to other objects than the development of the resources of the country, so that it is rare to find them affording the slightest facilities to commerce" —(1853) "Western India" Mackay, p. 377.

appear to have been completely neglected.³ The self-sufficing village communities must have had a limited amount of internal trade, subject to the weather. The major section of the roads were only fair weather tracks. With the increasing stability of the Government, the Company turned its attention to the development of roads for the easier passage of the internal products to the coast. The progress of internal road development was one of prolonged and utmost difficulty. It was naturally the result of the physical features of the country.

As in the realm of revenue so in the matters of road maintenance and construction, the foreigners continued the old scheme of things. Captain Pottinger of Ahmednagar, supplied Mr. Chaplin with the necessary information⁴ regarding the up-keep and maintenance of roads under the late Peshwa. Under the former Government, certain persons called "Ghant Pandays," "Sir Naiques," "Hushun Nuwees" performed the duties connected with roads, and received in return a small allowance from the merchants, "above the just dues of the Government." Pottinger was of the opinion that these officials ought to continue their services, but "modified as might seem advisable."

It was the duty of the "Ghant Pandays" to see that the ghauts and roads were kept in a passable condition. The "Sir Naiques" were entrusted with guarding the ghauts, and were subservient to the person who held a sanad from Government like the "Hushun Nuwees." The Naique was, besides, a muster master general of the troops stationed in the hill forts as well as chowkis on the ghauts, and on account of the protection he gave the merchants he enjoyed a small wutun. Under the new administration there was no necessity to continue the services of "Naiques," or "Nuwees," but Pottinger suggested that "they should be placed on the same footing as the Pandays." If the Government agreed to this, then the keeping of the ghauts and the neighbouring roads in repair, should under the new agreements be continued as of old.

As regards the general upkeep of the roads throughout the country, Pottinger said that he had not learnt of any fixed principle, save the custom that the people of the circumjacent and adjacent villages "were liable to be called out to mend the roads." When occasions required it, and during the Collector's annual circuit, a peon was sent

³ "Were you understood rightly in saying that the Native Princes of India, particularly the Mahrattas, do not hold commerce in estimation and give but little encouragement to it?"—I conceive myself to be rightly understood.—Sir Mallet, "Evidence before the Select Committee, 1813," p. 253.

⁴ Letter No. 1321 of January 18, 1822.

to the village Patel to have the roads, through which the Collector passed, repaired. And this request was gladly obeyed as the ryots were "sensible to the advantages of an easy communication from one district to another." If this system could be made general, the Collector said that "the whole of the population will derive the benefit of it." If these suggestions were acceptable to the Commissioner, Pottinger wrote that he would advise the Kumavisdars to be instructed accordingly, and proclamations would be issued that all roads nearest villages were to be repaired after the close of every rainy season so as to be passable by laden carts. Where ghauts, or other natural difficulties intervened which required labour, some assistance could be taken of the "Beldars" who were experts as regards this labour. Such were the steps suggested in 1822.

No connected history of the development of the means of communication during these early years is available. The little fragmentary evidence, as borne by the manuscript letters, shows sporadic efforts now and again to repair the roads, or to make plans for their construction.

Mr. Chaplin wrote in 1823 to Captain Robertson that the Governor-in-Council had authorised an expenditure of Rs. 1,000 on the roads in the vicinity of Dhulia, and the aid of prisoners would also be offered.⁵ In February of 1824, Chaplin requested the Collector of Ahmednagar's opinion "on the road which may be considered best from Tanna to Nassick, or any other place west of Copergaon, or most capable of being rendered an easy communication between Bombay and the northern part of Ahmednugur district and southern parts of Khandaish."⁶ This inquiry arose due to the Governor deciding on the opening of the "Tull Ghaut," or the "Peepry Ghaut" for the passage of wheel carriages between the Concan and the Deccan. In the same year (1824) in March, we learn that the Government had authorised Robertson the employment of 1,000 workmen on the roads in Poona.⁷ It was requested that the persons employed on road construction should be chiefly of the cultivating classes, which would induce many to remain at home who would have otherwise emigrated.⁸ The year 1824 will be remembered as a year of widespread famine in Maharashtra, hence the necessity to induce the ryots not to quit their village by a wage for labour on road

⁵ Letter No. 6438 of August 22, 1823.

⁶ Letter No. 7670 of February 2, 1824.

⁷ Letter No. 7743 of March 4, 1824.

⁸ Ibid.

construction. On the "Bapdeevy Ghaut" no less than 1,000 ordinary labourers were employed in repairing and reconstruction. Besides these workmen, the list gave other skilled workers as the subadars, muckadums, stone-cutters, puckalees, carpenters, hammermen, smiths, bellow-boys and puroves.⁹ The year 1824, therefore, shows remarkable activity in road repair, planning, and construction. In September of 1824, Captain Mason reported to the Commissioner on the work done on the roads in the Deccan. The party employed at Poona under Lieutenant Hughes finished a road from "Bhouta" through the "Khend" to Alla, a distance of 3 miles and 3 furlongs in two months. They also made a road from "Osawara" to the descent of Kier Ghaut, a distance of 6 miles 7 furlongs in three months. Many parts of the road from Kier to Poona remained, even after the repairs, impassable for carts. The party employed at Sholapur under Lieutenant Cooke finished 3 miles 2 furlongs of road from the ghaut to Kurkumb in two months, and then levelled a road from Patus to Poona in one month. The party employed on "Bap Dew Ghaut" finished 2 miles 2 furlongs of road over the ghaut in three months, after which they finished five miles of road from the ghaut into the cantonment in two months. The general advantage of this work, wrote Mason, was the increase of wood and fodder which the people brought from the upper country daily. According to the Government orders one havildar, one muccaddam and twelve labourers were kept on each road to keep it in constant repair.¹⁰

Most of these roads were constructed for the facility and comfort of military transport. In 1820 the troops marching from one district to another, had to depend for their supplies on the villages through which they passed. The Commanders of the detachments were to report the intended stages at which the companies would halt. The villages were to furnish whatever the place could afford at the rates of the village market. If the officer said that he was wholly dependent on the country for his supplies, and should there not be sufficient supplies at the stages, the local officers were enjoined to collect such articles as were requisite by inviting the merchants of the neighbouring villages to send stalls, and to charge something above the rates of their own villages as remuneration for their trouble and expense.

This mode of travel ought to have helped villages materially, but the greatest grievance of the ryots was the compulsion of furnishing forage and wood, "neither of which articles were ever willingly paid

⁹ Letter No. 2056 of May 6, 1824

¹⁰ Letter No. 1270 of September 30, 1824

for." But even more than this difficulty of supply was the pressing of coolies, more often the villagers, to carry the burdens from stage to stage, and the high-handed attitude of laying hands on any property without paying for it. To make matters worse, the villagers were not even paid to carry the loads. There were always plenty of coolies, tattoos, and bullocks, procurable for hire at Panwell and at Poona, at both of which places rates were fixed.¹¹ "There is no excuse therefore," wrote Robertson, Collector of Poona, "for individuals, or troops, setting out from either of these places without being properly provided with carriage." Besides, high road regulations were also issued in the Poona District. Each village was furnished with a copy of the regulations, and a separate list was given stating the number of available coolies. There was also given a list of the prices of articles which could be revised every six months.¹² In spite of these precautions, there is every reason to believe, from the evidence before us, that these regulations were repeatedly broken, especially by the military.¹³

II Extract from the Poona City "Nerrick"

From Poona	To Panwell		To Seroor		To Ahmednuggur		To Sattara	
	70 miles	40 miles	80 miles	65 miles	65 miles	5 days	6 days	5 days
	5 days	3 days	6 days	5 days	5 days	6 days	5 days	5 days
Hamalls and Bangey men	Rs 3 2 0	Rs 1 3 0	Rs 4 0 0	Rs 3 2 0	Rs 3 2 0	Rs 2 0 0	Rs 2 0 0	Rs 2 0 0
Coolies	2 2 0	1 1 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0
Bullocks	3 2 0	1 3 0	3 2 0	3 2 0	3 2 0	3 2 0	3 2 0	3 2 0
Tattoos	3 2 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0

If the number of days marked at the top of the column be exceeded for each extra day there shall be paid per day.

To Hamalls	Gong	Returning
" Coolies	7 annas each	5 annas each
" Bullocks	5 " "	5 " "
" Tattoos	7 " "	7 " "
	½ Rupee each	½ Rupee each

12 Letter No. 686 of May 14, 1820

13 Extract from Division by Brigr. Genr Smith, C.B.

Camp Seroor, June 23, 1818.

It is most positively ordered that no biganies or coolies should be pressed or seized from this village, or anything taken from it by troops or military passengers without the required prices being paid for the same.

The peon or patell, in charge of this paper, is required to report the names or description of troops and individuals disregarding this order.

By order
(Sd.) S. Halifax

Circular to the Officers Officiating as Collectors and Magistrates Under
the Orders of the Commissioner

Camp Carla.
March 28, 1818.

Sir,

The protection of Baji Row's late districts in the Western Deccan and the just treatment of the inhabitants by the strictest discipline of the troops be-

We may now consider the communications as they prevailed in each of the districts of the Bombay Deccan. Beginning with Khandesh, we find that the Maratha rule had almost destroyed its trade. "At the beginning of the British rule there were no main roads. The tracks were ill-appointed and deficient in everything but comfort and danger."¹⁴ Khandesh at this period consisted of a few miserable hamlets.¹⁵ During these early years, the only road on which time and money was spent, was the Bombay and Agra trunk road, and that was, it appears, because it connected the interior with the coast. Khandesh continued to be the main thoroughfare for cotton from Berar to Bombay, and no less than 1,80,000 bullocks were employed to convey cotton to its destination.

In Nasik, the conditions were no better, and the only line of communication lay to Nasik and Malegaon. At the beginning of the British rule, the greater part of trade between Khandesh and the coast passed through Nasik along the Bombay Agra road. About 1824, when Khandesh suffered by the drop in the supply of cotton to Bengal, Nasik also suffered a period of depression.¹⁶

The necessity of good roads was strongly expressed on the introduction of the new survey in every survey report. In 1841, there were still no made roads, and the Thal Pass was so rough and stony that carts could only pass with the greatest of difficulty. Until 1863, the main Agra highway absorbed most of the expenditure set apart for road construction. But since the levy of a special tax for local work, road-

coming most important objects of my duty, I do myself the honour to inform you that I have issued the most positive orders to all officers in command, to pay for all forage taken from villages, as well as for any supplies

A portion of the Division under my command being unfortunately habituated in the careless practice of free foraging, which is too often the means and a cloak for more unlicensed plundering, I beg you to call upon all native officers employed...to acquaint you from time to time, with any instances they may experience of the seizure or plunder of grain, forage, or any other village property, or of pressing of coolies for carriage of individual baggage. Whenever this is done for the public, which is very rare, they are always to be paid for.

If you will have the goodness to acquaint me with any oppression or irregularities committed against the inhabitants, either in cases herein contemplated, or other instance, and stating the particular Detachment or party and by whom commanded, I shall feel obliged to you...

(Sd) Lionel Smith, B.G.

14 "Khandesh Gazetteer," p. 207

15 Ibid.

16 "At this time the price received by the cotton grower was little more than a penny in a pound. The exporters were rich local traders, or Bombay native firms, who sent agents to advance money to landholders to buy from local dealers."—"Nasik Gazetteer," p. 126.

making made rapid progress. The opening of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in 1862 improved matters considerably for Nasik.

In Ahmednagar there were no made roads on the advent of the British and "no line of traffic fit for wheels." The chief communications were from Ahmednagar and Kopergaon. The country was greatly in want of roads. All that could be done was the repairing of several country tracks into tolerable cart roads. In 1830, in spite of bad roads, there was considerable traffic, chiefly in the hands of Lamans,¹⁷ a tribe who owned bullocks. Since 1826, all the leading routes in Poona had been taken up and made into fair, or good, roads. In 1830 the Poona Panwell road was greatly improved. At this time the mail-cart to Poona on this road was the only mail-cart in India. In 1830, hardly a single cart was met with between Khandala and Poona. From 1836 onwards, the opening of new roads attracted the attention of the survey officers. It was in the same year that the District Officers felt the necessity of introducing measures to cheapen the cost of carriage. Roads were in continual construction, and the new road down the Bhor Pass made it possible to send the field produce to the Concan in carts.

In Sattara, before 1840, cart traffic was almost unknown. The first made road in 1841 brought cart communication through the Salpa Pass between Poona and Sattara. Even in 1848, except along the old Poona and Sattara roads the traffic went by pack bullocks. In the same year, about 3,000 carts on a monthly average, including those coming from Phultun and Pandharpur, went by the Salpa Pass. Sattara was

¹⁷"²²¹⁵ Who are the Bumjarees?—Their origin is involved in great obscurity, but they are entirely a pastoral people, who never live in houses, have no fixed residence, but are constantly under canvas. They have millions of cattle, are always armed, and have certain privileges of character so that they can even pass between two contending armies without being attacked or molested.

"²²¹⁶: Are they predatory?—They are an unruly body of people, and no doubt where they are strongest, help themselves as they pass through the country, but they are an exceedingly useful class of people, and armes could not move without them in India.

"²²¹⁷ Are they distinct from any other class of people?—Quite distinct. Their persons, their ornaments, their arms, their habits, and such religious notions as they have are quite distinct from those of any other class in India. They may ultimately be found to be the descendants of the ancient persecuted inhabitants of the greater part of India, the Boodists.

"²²¹⁸ Are they distinct in their language?—The language they speak is generally that spoken in the country in which they wander.

"²²¹⁹ Have they anything of the nature of caste among them?—Not among themselves, they are evidently a low caste people, that is, they are free from prejudices of castes."—W H. Sykes "Minutes of Evidence," Vol III, p 183

nearer the coast than any other district of Maharastra, but in spite of its nearness, the coast was 140 to 200 miles from Sattara, and only 70 to 180 miles from the other districts. This was due to the Sahydari barrier that separated the Sattara Collectorate from the coast, and at this time the tracks were fit only for laden cattle, and lay nearly 15 to 20 miles apart. In 1857, the opening of the Varagudha Pass brought Wai within 60 miles of Mahda; in 1864 the Kumbharli Pass put Kurra within six miles of Chiplun, this shows the rapid progress in communications in the fifties and sixties of the last century.

Of Sholapur, few details regarding roads are available before 1855, and from 1817 till about 1850, Sholapur had no main road and only a few carts, traffic went over fair weather tracks,¹⁸ or on pack bullocks. Between 1845 and 1849, Captain Adams completed a 61 mile road which ran north-west and south-west from the river Bhima on the border of Poona to Sholapur, at a cost of Rs 2.20,000. From Sholapur, the same road was carried due east to Hyderabad for a distance of 17 miles, and was laid open in 1853, costing Rs 11,700 for its entire labour. Besides these extensions, communications were given a greater impetus by the introduction of the railway. The line up to Sholapur was begun in 1856¹⁹ and extended southwards by 1865.

Such were the means of communication in those early years. Some of the districts were isolated from others by mountain spurs, and conditions were made worse in the rainy season when those fair-weather tracks became useless for travel. This isolation may have gone a long way in making the villages self-sufficient and independent. With the advent of the British, the means of communication had to improve, because the products of the interior, especially cotton,²⁰ had to find an outlet to the coast for exportation. The Deccan was to be converted

¹⁸ "During the 8 dry months the tracts were neither smooth nor easy for carts. Of these old tracts 8 lines entered at Punderpoor, 8 at Sholapur and 2 at Pangao in Barsi"—"Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 257.

¹⁹ The line from Diksal in Poona to Barsi Road was opened on October 23, 1859, from Barsi Road to Mohol on January 20, 1860 and from Mohol to Sholapur on June 6, 1860. See "Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 257.

²⁰ "Would not cotton cultivation in India be very much facilitated by making good roads in that country? No doubt it would."

"Is there any prospect of better roads being opened for facility of transfer of articles of commerce?"—There are great difficulties. The first great difficulty is the want of stone to metal them. The other great difficulty is the want of money.

"Do facilities exist for exportable productions of India, by means of improved internal communications?"—I think that something may be done in that way; but the great means of improving exportable production of India is to improve the institutions of India, to give perfect protection to property,

into a large productive farm for raw materials to be shipped to England for manufacture. These improved means of communication should not only have helped the new-comers but have been an untold blessing to the Deccan itself. But due to the transit duties in these early years, and their continuance for some years, internal trade could not receive the full benefit of these road improvements.

In our perusal of the extension of the New Survey in the Deccan the means of communication and their importance were stressed by all survey officials. Even the Court of Directors in 1849 requested the Collectors and Superintendents to consider the formation of roads through the Districts of the Presidency.

"We only desire," they wrote, "in this place to impress on you that the maintenance and, still more, the improvement of land revenue must greatly depend on the facilities of communication which are afforded, and that the capability of India to supply articles fitted for export to this and other countries, especially those in which, as in cotton and sugar, the bulk bears a very high relation to the value, can never be fairly tested until ready and cheap means of transport to the coast are generally provided."²¹

It was not till June of 1857 that Government sanctioned the laying out of the railway in the territories under review. The Government resolution (10th June 1857) recommended the organization of a railway establishment under one Lieutenant Prescott for the duty of splitting

the greatest possible encouragement to enterprize, and the outlay of capital, particularly by Europeans.

"If the produce were increased in the manner you have suggested, are the means of internal communications sufficient to convey such increased produce without any material loss upon the conveyor?"—Yes, they are sufficient. The roads of India, speaking generally, although they are not good, yet they are not very bad, they seldom go beyond a certain point of roughness; they seldom become entirely impassable except during rains, and the carriages of the country are very stoutly made, and are adapted to the state of the roads.

"Are the roads repaired at the cost of the Government, or of the occupiers of the soil?"—They are seldom repaired at all, the roads are nothing more than a track which has been left for the purposes of intercourse.

"They are enclosed"—Without any hedges.

"When a track becomes deep and rough, another track may be made"—Yes, that is the general state of the roads. On the great line of roads they are repaired at the expense of Government.

"Except in wet seasons for the carriage of goods by land, the communication is sufficient"—Yes, quite sufficient; I do not mean that it cannot be improved, but it does very well."—Report From the Select Committee, 1840, p. 111, 115.

²¹ Despatch No 10 of May 30, 1849, found in Letter No. 4989 of August 15, 1849.

up fields, altering survey registers, etc., along the Sholapur, Poona and Nasik lines of railway.²²

The railway engineers were to be in touch with the Collectors of the districts where the sites of the railway crossings had been determined. The land required for the railway was to be assessed by the revenue officers, and then made over to the company.

In 1860, the prices advanced and with it a corresponding improvement in the means of transport was also a necessity if the producer in a remote locality was to compete with those who held the more favourably situated lands. This stimulus was given by the extension of the railway, but with it a similar impetus as regards road development became a necessity. To supply the want of such roads meeting the great trunk lines of communication, local funds were to be raised, and the revision assessment was chosen as the most suitable time to raise the funds. It was suggested that after fixing the assessment of a District, one anna was to be added to every rupee of revenue as a contribution to the local fund for the improvement of the internal communication of the District.²³ But in October of the same year (1860) this resolution was dropped by Government.²⁴

It was in June of 1861 that instructions were issued to take up land for railway purposes. Land to be acquired for railway purposes was divided into four classes: A, B, C, and D. The first class (A) consisted of land which the Railway Company received free of charge under contract with Government for permanent occupation. The second class (B) included land provided free of cost, but only for temporary oc-

²² "The necessity for organizing a separate establishment for the purpose of altering the village register and maps, etc., in consequence of the railway passing through the Poona, Sholapur and Ahmednagar Collectorates is not apparent. The several superintendents of survey in the District through which the railway passes or may hereafter pass, should arrange for the performance of this duty."—Resolution of June 10, 1857. The above information is found in Letter No 495 of 1857 (Railway branch).

²³ Resolution No 954 of March 9, 1860, paras 13 to 15

²⁴ "On consideration, however, of this subject, the Honourable the Governor in Council is of the opinion that the legality of these orders is open to considerable doubt, and that it is very questionable whether the Government had the authority to levy a special rate for a special purpose, without, in the first instance, obtaining an Act of the legislature for the purpose. But it is not on this ground alone His Excellency in Council considers the orders in question should be rescinded; he believes the principle on which the cesses were levied to be unsound and objectionable, for if the Survey rates can bear the imposition of an addition of 6½ per cent. . it is a proof that they have as a land tax been assessed lower than they need have been, whilst if they cannot bear the addition, it would be unjustifiable to impose it."—Resolution No 3567 of October 6, 1860

cupation. The third class (C) was land which the Railway Company provided at its own cost, and in the fourth class (D) there was land which did not come directly into the possession of the Company at all²⁵

The first class of land was to acquire permanent works, including the road with its bridges, etc., and all stations, workshops, permanent store-houses and the like, necessary for the line. The occupation of this land was to be permanent, and it would only have to be given up when the contract terminated and the whole then lapsed to Government.

Class B was to contain lands essential for the setting up of "spoil banks, extra excavations to make banks for river diversion, and for the storage of railway materials pending the construction of the line, or their despatch to the works." The occupation of this land was temporary and free of cost, and on its return to Government it would be for the revenue officer to dispose of it to the best advantage of the Government.

Class C was to contain land that was to be provided by the Company at its own expense. This land was required for the provision or preparation of materials; for purposes contingent on the actual execution of the work on the land, though not giving the Company a claim to the provision of the land free of charge. The Railway Company was to be responsible for the construction of all works, only receiving from Government without charge the land on which the work stood. Such land, given by the Government, was to be kept by the Company at a fair rental, and when necessity for occupation ceased, it was to be returned to the Government.

The land, under the final class D, which did not come directly into the occupation of the railway authorities, was to be provided free of charge. This land was used for roads, either new roads leading to the railway stations, or to permanent store-yards or workshops "detached from the main works or divisions or changes of old roads, made necessary by railway works."

This division of lands was considered to be quite convenient for all future transactions between the railway authorities and the Government. The Company was to pay for all advantages derived from houses, trees, tanks or other property or land which was not provided free of charge, while on the other hand, the Government was bound for the clearance of all materials on the surface to be provided for the railway use.

²⁵ Circular No. 55 of June 29 1861

The authorities were to occupy the lands according to plans drawn to a scale of 150 feet to the inch. The measurements were recorded in accordance with the fiscal division of village estates, or mouzal pergunnas and "zillahs." The other regulations were merely with regard to the ways in which the different classes of lands were to be put down in charts, submitted for Government keeping.

The railway authorities, desirous of obtaining land, were to deal with the revenue authorities in whose hands the Government had entrusted the necessary power for the disposal of lands. The consulting engineers and the local revenue authorities were held responsible for the fulfilment of the above stated stipulations. The local authorities were to keep all accounts "for the whole of such lands would one day revert to the Crown."

IRRIGATION—PART II

In a dry-crop country like the Bombay Deccan, irrigation would be of utmost importance for the mitigation of scarcity so widely prevalent. In the early years of British rule, all the evidence we can collect is that of efforts to repair tanks and aqueducts of former times, and in a few instances, the digging of new canals. The land administration and the peaceful settlement of the conquered territories for the first 30 years (1818-1848), most probably occupied the minds of the Collectors so that not till the introduction of the New Survey of Captain Wingate is there evidence of British interest in the introduction of irrigation, its maintenance, and new schemes of construction.

In 1851, George Wingate thought it "just and expedient that the several parties who may benefit by works of irrigation should contribute toward their construction and maintenance." On this principle Wingate framed a code of rules to regulate the "contributions in aid of these objects by the parties concerned." The Draft Code underwent slight changes at the hands of various Collectors, and being finally approved, was dispatched to the Government of India by E. H. Goldsmid, the Secretary to the Government of Bombay. The relations between the Government and the parties concerned were that "the repairs or improvements to existing works for irrigation, shall be borne jointly by Government and the occupant of land, whether wholly or partially exempt from assessment, or subject to ordinary assessment."²⁶

²⁶ Draft Rules framed by George Wingate accompanying his letter to the Revenue Commissioner, F. C. Fawcett Letter No 2089 of August 12, 1851

The Government of India requested²⁷ the Bombay Government to consider the method followed in Madras and the north-western provinces, where the fresh outlay on the works of irrigation and their maintenance were undertaken by Government, and a rent was levied for the use of water so as to yield a large interest on the outlay. In reply²⁸ to this, Wingate contrasted the irrigation system of Madras, where repairs were few and far between, with what they were likely to be in the Deccan. Madras had quite a number of rivers which made the canal system far easier and less expensive. Besides, in the Deccan, "considerable portion of land irrigated... is held rent free, and on this land it would not be possible to impose a water rent for re-imburasing Government for the expense of repair again by the revised assessment lately introduced, the rents of irrigated land have been fixed for a term of 30 years and do not admit of enhancement during that period." Wingate stated further that even in Madras, of late, it had been found very expensive by Government to repair and maintain the smaller irrigation works, and the Government had thought it a necessity to define the mode in which the villages were to contribute on repair and maintenance of works for irrigation. The Government of Bombay, agreeing with Wingate, wrote back to the Government of India that they had fully considered the possibility of adopting the arrangements such as those in force in Madras, before the draft rules were submitted.²⁹

Mr. I. P. Grant, Secretary to the Government of India, in reply³⁰ to the request of the Bombay Government for passing of the Draft Code, wrote that the Code would compel occupants of lands to contribute to works for irrigation carried out by Government in which they had no voice, nor were they allowed to judge for themselves whether the probable benefits to be derived from the works were proportionate to the expense to be incurred. The evidence before the Government of India did not show the Governor-General-in-Council sufficient reason for such a law. Besides, a sanguine officer, with the best intentions, might sanction works, improvement, or repairs, incapable of producing the benefits anticipated. In such cases the ruin of many landlords, who might have objected to the works from the first, would be brought about.

²⁷ Letter No 769 of December 11, 1851.

²⁸ Letter No 20 of January 14, 1852.

²⁹ Letter No 614 of January 27, 1852.

³⁰ Letter No 749 of September 17, 1852

These objections against the Draft Code revealed the injustice of calling on the occupants of irrigated lands to stand by Government in schemes in the execution and planning of which they had no voice. Even stronger than this objection was the fact that, according to the New Survey, "the ryots of the incumbents of assessable lands . . . have not been made subject to the stipulation referred to."

Goldsmit submitted a very lengthy report³¹ in defence of the Bombay Government's proposals. This defence is hardly worth entering into, in the light of the final decision of the Central Government. Grant replied³² that further explanations and documents could not explain away the former objections raised by the Government of India, and, therefore, they were unable "to pass a law of the nature proposed." Thus, the scheme for the works of irrigation received a blow which the country could ill afford. Nearly at the end of our period (1818-1868) under review we come across a resolution in 1867 from the Government of India stating that, since complete information in connection with the land settlement had been obtained, no delay should be made "relative to the preparation of projects for irrigation."³³

In making out the project for irrigation, the Chief Engineer said that the officials who were to be consulted in the execution of the work, were to be the Collector, the Executive Engineer, and the Superintendent of Revenue Survey or a senior survey officer. These officials were to be assembled in a Committee, and the plan of work which was adopted in Khandesh in 1862, when the Irrigation Department was first organised, was found to answer extremely well. The Committee had all the information placed before them that was obtainable from the records of the Revenue and Irrigation Departments regarding proposals for works in various localities, and the level of the country. The Committee's reports were then sent to Government bearing the Revenue Commissioner's remarks and suggestions.³⁴

According to Lieut. Col. J. G. Fife,³⁵ the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, there were two modes of irrigating the country. First, by canals,

³¹ Report No. 820 of February 10, 1853.

³² Letter No. 342 of April 29, 1853.

"The most noble the Governor General of India in Council does not find the objections which originally fell to the Draft Act, and which were explained in my letter to your address of the 17th September last, removed by the further explanations and documents now brought before him, and he is, therefore, unable to pass a law of the nature proposed."

³³ Resolution No. 2985 of 1867.

³⁴ Memorandum No. 1724 of November 9, 1867.

³⁵ Lieut. Col. J. G. Fife was appointed as the head of the Irrigation Department by Resolution No. 98. I—2666 of November 5, 1867.

with or without storage works on the river whence the supply of water was brought. Secondly, by a number of independent tanks on tributary streams. "As a rule," said Fife, "it is an unquestionable fact that the larger the river, the more reliable the supply of water; if the rivers are fed from the Western Ghauts, where the rainfall never fails, they are, of course, the best source of supply in event of a drought. Hence, to obtain a satisfactory result on the expenditure of the capital, the rivers, more especially those which are fed from the Western Ghauts, are the best to work upon. The supply of water is at once the largest and most reliable." The Deccan, according to the Colonel, was a most favourable country for tanks, except "where they can be placed on the main streams when their size will render them worthy of being called lakes."

Conditions for works of irrigation in the Bombay Deccan, and the execution of projects for its realisation, were entrusted to four Executive Engineers, Captain Penny, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Campbell, and Lieutenant Buckle, working under the guidance of Colonel Fife. We may now consider the reports drawn up by the subordinate engineers for Colonel Fife to act upon. These reports enlighten us on the possibility, or otherwise, of introducing new projects of irrigation in various districts of the Province.

Mr. Campbell, writing¹⁶ from Sattara, said that from what he had seen of the irrigation systems adopted by the ryots in different parts of his district, it appeared to him that there were no fixed modes of irrigation, and they differed greatly in different parts of his Collectorate, depending much on the time of the year when the greater fall of rain took place.

As a rule, he wrote, in districts where rice was not cultivated, a canal capable of carrying a supply of water sufficient for the rubbi crops would also be large enough to carry the monsoon supply. But in the eastern districts, where it was occasionally necessary to give some of the rubbi crops their first watering before the monsoon crops had received their last, the canal should be constructed with a slightly larger section to meet the contingency.

Mr. Griffith, submitting his report¹⁷ on the possibility of irrigation in Ahmednagar and Nasik, wrote that in the districts under his charge

¹⁶ Report No. 56 of January 29, 1868.

¹⁷ Report No. 56^a of May 29, 1868.

there was a very narrow belt on the eastern slopes of the Western Ghauts, where alone a sufficient rainfall could be depended upon for the production of a monsoon crop. This belt was not more than ten to twenty miles in its average width, and the surface of the ground was so broken a nature from the proximity of the ghauts that it would be considered of no value for irrigational purposes on anything but a small scale. The whole of Ahmednagar and Nasik, therefore, were liable to suffer from want of seasonable monsoon rains. In no part of these districts was there rain sufficient for rice cultivation.

Looking at these conditions Griffith was of the opinion that in the Deccan the main feature of irrigation should be the adoption of the canal system and in extensive use of the monsoon waters. All the rivers rising in the Western Ghauts depended on a large monsoon supply even though the local rains of the eastern districts were to entirely fail. Therefore, all irrigation projects, according to him, founded on wells across the rivers, were to utilise as far as possible, the monsoon waters for rice and other monsoon crops, the cultivation of which he believed would be limited only by the supply of water available.

In Sholapur District rice was by no means the staple food of the people. The average rainfall was only about twenty-six inches in the year, and when monsoon irrigation from wells was practised, the people generally used the water to assist the dry crops usually grown at that season. The amount of water necessary for irrigation purposes was less than that required for rubbi or perennial cultivation. Under the circumstances, Mr. Penny wrote,³⁸ unless the practice of the people was altered, a canal of sufficient capacity for cold weather crops would also be sufficient for irrigating an equal area of ground during the monsoon month.

Mr. Buckle from Poona said³⁹ that the primary object of irrigation works was to prevent famine by securing one good crop every year. It therefore appeared advisable in his district to design canals to carry the monsoon water of the rivers. With regard to its practical execution, he suggested that the two rivers on which the works could be carried out were the Mota and the Nira. If the canals were designed on a small scale, the possibility of a famine would not be averted, and the first condition to be observed in the construction of an irrigation canal would not be fulfilled, because neither the Nira nor

³⁸ Report No. 873 of August 6, 1868.

³⁹ Report No. 726 of August 7, 1868.

the Mota could supply more than fifty cubic feet per second for rubbi irrigation, a quantity only sufficient for some 7,500 acres, or about one-twentieth of the area commanded.

These reports, according to Colonel Fife, suggested:⁴⁰ firstly, the large supply of water in the rivers; secondly, the limited supply of water for the rubbi cultivation; thirdly, the cultivation of the same grain at different seasons whenever there was sufficient rain; fourthly, the limited rainfall, except close to the ghauts, and finally, the absence of rice cultivation.

Would the people change their ordinary staple crops for rice was a matter for doubt, even if works of irrigation were constructed. In the Deccan, where rainfall was scarce, straw was of great value to the cultivator. It was required by the ryot in large quantities for their cattle. The jawari straw was infinitely more valuable for forage than rice straw, wrote Fife, and hence rice would never entirely supersede jawari even were the water rate the same.

In Khandesh, he wrote, during the monsoon of 1852, he himself had been present, and had noticed that the people, even in time of scarcity, cultivated sugar-cane and bajri, and rice was only grown side by side. "If rice had been so much more valuable than bajree," wrote the Colonel, "it would have been sown to the exclusion of the latter on the whole of the ground, as there was no want of water in the water-courses at that season. Again, bajree and jowaree straw are both brought into Poona for forage, whereas rice straw, though procurable within fifteen miles, is never brought in, except in small quantities for the purpose of packing articles, and not for forage." Rice was grown more extensively in the Concan where the rainfall often went above one hundred inches; while in the Deccan, with an average rainfall of nearly one-third of that of the Concan, rice could never be grown with profit. Rice was, besides, not the staple food of the people in the Deccan, and it was, therefore, evident that if it were produced in large quantities by irrigation, "such an alteration in prices of grain must take place as to make rice unprofitable, or less profitable than bajree or jowaree."

Writing on the nutritive value of rice the Colonel was of the opinion that it was a clear disadvantage to have a population principally dependent for its food upon one kind of grain only especially rice, which was a poor food. No undue encouragement to its culture should

be given by allowing water at a cheaper rate for its cultivation but, on the other hand, every effort should be made to discourage its growth.

Regarding the construction of canals for the monsoon or tubbi crops, Fife wrote that the whole of the Decean did not have a great preponderance of crops in any particular season. There was no cold weather to retard the growth of the grains, and the people were ready to grow the staple crops whenever they had rain. These facts, and the scarcity of rain, removed all difficulty as to the season when the people would require water. They would evidently take it whenever it was available. This being admitted, the next question was "When was the water available?" "Unquestionably during the monsoon, and accordingly our works are mainly designed with that end in view."

The irrigation works in the Decean being of a difficult nature and involving a heavy financial output, it was expressed that "they should not lie idle, or comparatively idle, for eight months in the year, and the nearer a work approaches to what is commonly the standard of excellence in northern India, that is carrying a *constant* supply, the more beneficial it will be."

The best way to meet scarcity in the future was to grow for all kinds of crops, and when the dreaded time approached, and the failure of rain became evident, nearly all the land, including such as was set aside as fallow near the canal, could be sown with crops which were failing elsewhere for want of rain. When the people had learnt to grow various crops by means of a perennial canal, and had become wealthy, their ability to sustain through a calamity would greatly increase. The lands which lay fallow could be used for raising the staple food in time of scarcity, while the wealth of the people and the variety of the occupation would render them less dependent for employment on agriculture.⁴¹ "There is always food of some kind somewhere, and what the people want is the means of buying it. Wealth and occupation, not wholly connected with the crop which furnishes the staple food, furnish such means."⁴² Such were the wishes of Colonel Fife.⁴³

⁴¹ Report No 1906 of 1868

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ By a Government Resolution No 146, I—2738 of November 21, 1868, the reports of the Engineers as well as that of Colonel Fife were ordered to be printed and sent on to the Government of India

The following were the Irrigation Works constructed in the Bombay Presidency during the years succeeding 1868

In 1866, while Fife and his subordinates were busy in the Deccan, Colonel R. Strachey was appointed by the Secretary of State to study all irrigation systems in important localities in India. Strachey, at the end of his strenuous labours, submitted a report on the possibility, or otherwise, of irrigation works in India. We shall take into consideration his suggestions for the Deccan and Khandesh only.

According to him, with the exception of a small class of works existing in Khandesh and still less in the Deccan, there was nothing deserving of special notice. The Khandesh works were "small masonry dams, called bundas placed across the streams, which flowed from the Western Ghauts." From the engineering point of view they were of very little importance, though they were "of considerable value to the district." The financial expenditure on these irrigation channels varied in amount, but the returns were no doubt appreciable. The control over irrigation was not in the hands of the Engineering Department, but with the Collector, this was possible because of "their small size" and "their general character" which called for minimum of control.

The physical features of both the Deccan and Khandesh were alike. In both territories the cultivated lands commonly lay in comparatively flat-bottomed valleys traversed by streams, mostly dry from December to June, and closed in on both sides by steep hills.⁴⁴ These features according to Strachey made it particularly difficult to construct works of irrigation. The longitudinal slope of the valley was so small that a canal had to be carried a great length before it rose from the level of the river bed to the level of the country to be watered.⁴⁵ The irrigation works so far executed in the Deccan and Khandesh had been dams across streams. "Till now," wrote the Colonel, "nothing has been settled as to the best means of extending the utility of any of these works by connecting them with a reservoir." The Engineer had come to no definite conclusion as to what would be the "most economical system of storing water."

Works	Estimated Cost
Krishna Irrigation Project	Rs 5,62,744
Lakh Project	" 2,05,382
Tamda Canal on the Godavari River	6,13,331
Mitrow Canal	" 5,49,352
Ekrowk Tank Project	" 9,45,613

From information to the Govt. of Bombay of September 9, 1868.

⁴⁴ Memorandum No. 9 of April 7, 1867.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Later, Colonel Strachey, in consultation with Colonel Fife, proposed that the first step should be to derive from one of the principal streams a sufficient supply of monsoon water to provide for the wants of each locality. The means of doing this would be found by going backwards from the land to be irrigated along the most convenient line for a canal, until a sufficient supply of water was met with, either in a single stream or in several streams. Suitable dams and escape weirs would then be formed on these streams and the canals fed from them. The canals, in a comparatively long course which must be given them in order to bring them up to a proper level to command the cultivated land, would cross many minor streams, the water flowing down which might be drawn into irrigating channels so far as it was required. In this manner a fairly continual supply of water would probably be furnished for most parts of the country from July to September, which would suffice for the satisfactory maturing of one crop at least. For the supply to last into the cold weather, the suggestion was the storing of water "brought down by some river having an ample monsoon supply into some suitable basin or reservoir."

As to the prospect of remunerative returns from these irrigation facilities, Colonel Francis, the Settlement Commissioner, considered the additional sum, namely, Rs.1 an acre for an average crop, as a fairly satisfactory return. Colonel Francis was anxious to give irrigation as early as possible to the dry zone of the Deccan which was the "band running parallel to the line of the Ghauts." Meanwhile, the attention of Colonel Fife was given to the supply of water to the dry region about Indapur, and it was hoped that a project would soon mature which could serve as a model for future schemes of a like nature. In Khandesh, no proper financial gain from irrigation could be estimated, but the results showed a satisfactory growth of the area irrigated.

Colonel Strachey was against compelling the ryot to use the water and pay the rates, for he was of the opinion that the full realisation of return from irrigation should take place by a regular, natural and spontaneous growth.⁴⁶ He was, besides, almost certain that the demand for water in a few years would far exceed the power of supplying it, and there would be a danger of committing great injustice by attempting to force the introduction of irrigation prematurely. "To argue," wrote Strachey, "that because Government has spent money on these works mainly to benefit the cultivator, it has, therefore, acquired the right to

⁴⁶ Memorandum No. 9 of April 7, 1867.

compel the cultivator to use water at its own price . is to take up a position utterly indefensible and contrary to every principle of good Government." On the other hand, he agreed with the Bombay Government in its established practice of making "a separate special charge in addition to the land revenue proper, for the use of water derived from all irrigation works."

"It will not be out of place," wrote Strachey in his Memorandum, "if I also draw attention to the importance of making all new irrigation works undertaken in these Districts subservient, as far as possible, to purposes of communication. Whenever it is possible, the canal should be constructed so as to be fit for navigation, and in designing all masonry works, attention should be paid to this. Also it will in many cases, if not in all, be possible at a very small additional cost to make roads along the banks of the principal lines of irrigating channels. Such roads are of very great importance to the irrigation establishments as they facilitate access to the works and irrigated districts, and it will in all cases be worthwhile considering whether such additional outlay as might be necessary for making the bank of the canal a convenient road for ordinary traffic."

In 1863, the water-rate for both dry crop and garden assessment was fixed. The dry crop assessment of irrigated fields was first calculated upon the maximum dry crop rate adopted for the village⁴⁷. The garden assessment of all irrigable fields (entitled to receive water) was calculated upon the maximum garden rate fixed for the particular irrigation work⁴⁸. In 1869 a new water-rate was to be adopted for all new irrigation works in the Deccan⁴⁹. The water-rate on the "Wusna Canal"⁵⁰ in Sattara was Rs. 3 per acre for perennial irrigation; Rs. 1 per acre for eight months, and Rs. 2 per acre for four months. These rates were in addition to the dry crop rate and were levied for a period of three years, at the end of which the rates would be finally fixed for the remainder of the survey period.

⁴⁷ Resolution No. 4126 of November 5, 1868

⁴⁸ Resolution No. 665 of February 19, 1868

⁴⁹ Resolution No. 61 A-461 of February 27, 1868

⁵⁰The Wusna is a river in Sattara and this irrigation project was called the "Rewaree Project."

CHAPTER VII

MANUFACTURES--PART I

THE history of cotton cultivation in India would form a subject for a thesis by itself. The cultivation of cotton in India was practised from very early times, the export of raw cotton from India is a comparatively new thing. Before the nineteenth century, India was chiefly famous "for exporting her elegant fabrics to the most civilized nations in the world."¹ But it is not with the history of cotton in India that we are concerned, but with its growth and manufacture in the Bombay Deccan.

The innumerable survey reports and evidence of the Company's servants testify to the manufacture of cotton cloth as the one industry generally prevalent throughout the Deccan. The husbandman's chief industry was the manufacture of cotton cloth, not only for the requirements of his own family, but even for export to the surrounding districts. This hand-loom industry was prevalent in almost every part of India. These conditions, however, underwent a complete change on the advent of the British, and the Deccan came in for the exploitation of its raw materials for the English markets.

The cottage industries suffered in the Deccan, as in other parts of India on British occupation. Elphinstone (1830) was of the opinion, when giving evidence before the Select Committee, that he had no doubt that the extensive use of European manufactures among the Indian middle classes had thrown out of employment a number of Indian weavers. This had been brought about by the superior skill of English artisans, and their improvement in machinery, enabling them to import cheap cloth and undersell the native weavers in their own markets.² These circumstances lead to the supplanting of all good Indian cloth by European manufactured goods, except the article of very coarse cloth used by the lower classes; "those still continued to be manufactured."³ "No doubt," said Chaplin, "many manufacturers are compelled to resort to agriculture for maintenance, a department which is already overstocked, I am afraid."⁴

¹"Culture and Commerce of Cotton in India," J. F. Royle, p. 20.

²"East India Papers, 1830," p. 175

³"East India Papers, 1830," p. 179

⁴Ibid

In 1831, one James Ritchie, a partner in the house of Ritchie Finlay & Co. of Bombay, gave the following evidence before a Select Committee of the Commons:

"1526: Has not the trade between Bombay and Poonah and the territory of the late Peishwa fallen off very considerably since that country came into our possession?—I have understood so

"1527: Has not the export generally of China articles from Bombay to the Deccan decreased?—It has, and also the exportation of metals

"1532: What is the general condition of the great class of people on the island of Bombay in reference to means?—I should think that the great body were of course the poorer castes, the poorer classes.

"1533: Is not that the case also in the Deccan, and throughout the Company's territories on the western side of India?—It is

"1534: Are not the great body almost in a situation of beggary? — I cannot say altogether that; they certainly are very poor"⁵

When asked as to how to ameliorate the condition of the people, Colonel Sykes, in his evidence in 1832 suggested the raising of exportable articles and the development of manufactures.⁶ But England claimed the raw materials for her steel giants of Manchester, and India's part in the colonial policy was to supply the same.⁷ The few articles of Indian manufacture found competing favourably when exported to England, began to be so heavily taxed with import duties that their exportation soon became impossible, while on the other hand, British goods entered our markets on low import duties and in such large quantities that they ruined our hand industries.⁸

By 1832, according to Sykes, there were hardly any extensive manufactures left in the Deccan; they were reduced to the production of very

⁵ Minutes of Evidence on the Affairs of the East India Company 1831 pp. 68, 80 and 81

⁶ Evidence before the Select Committee 1832 p. 179

⁷ "Mr. Brooklehurst—It would be more desirable perhaps that India should produce the raw material and thus country show its skill in perfecting the raw material

⁸ Mr. Latpent—The course of things in India is decidedly leading to that.—Evidence before the Select Committee 1836 Q. 2764 and Q. 2779

⁸ "British cotton and silk goods conveyed in British ships to India, paid a duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and British woollen goods a duty of 2 per cent only. But Indian cotton goods imported into England paid a duty of 10 per cent, Indian silk goods a duty of 20 per cent, Indian woollen goods, a duty of 30 per cent"—"India in the Victorian Age," R. Dutt, p. 126.

coarse cotton cloth and blankets. He took a list of all cloths in Poona for sale to see whence they came, and he found, to his surprise, that the four districts of the Deccan produced scarcely a thing for sale beyond the coarsest articles "Valuable articles either came from the Jageerhdar's territory, or from Scendeh's (Scindiah), Holkar's or from Berar, or they were of European fabric"⁹

"Have the manufactures been affected by the importation of British Commodities?—Very seriously indeed¹⁰

"Do the lower class of people wear British goods?—Yes, cotton and woollen when they can afford to buy them"

⁹ Evidence before the Select Committee, 1832 p. 180

¹⁰ "1823 Has the importation of English cotton and other manufactures much increased of late?—Very much indeed since 181

"1824 Have the English cotton manufactures interfered with the Indian manufactures in the home market to any and what degree?—To a very great extent indeed, the Indian silk manufacture stands its ground, but the finer sorts of Indian cotton manufactures have almost disappeared, only a small quantity of Decca muslin is now made as an extraordinary luxury for the rajas and other wealthy natives, the peculiar kind of silky cotton formerly grown in Bengal from which the fine Decca muslin used to be made is now hardly ever seen the population of the town of Decca has fallen from 150,000 to 30,000 or 40,000 and the jungle and maddana are fast encroaching upon the town. The only cotton manufactures which stand their ground in India are of a very coarse kind, and the English cotton manufactures are generally consumed by all above the very poorest throughout India. In the gavaldas of the Native chiefs in Central India, almost every other man appears in a tunic of English chintz at places many hundred miles from the nearest English merchant, at the town of Palee in the very centre of Rappoontana, great quantities of Manchester goods are continually stored and sent forward; and when Captain Burns arrived at Cabul he found that the Manchester chintzes had within two or three preceding years, driven Russian chintzes completely out of the market. English copper has entirely superseded the use of native copper and the English iron has superseded the use of native iron in every thing except for cutting instruments where peculiar hardness is required; the native iron is much harder than European iron, and it stands its ground as far as that is concerned, vast quantities of sheet iron are sent into the interior, which are cut up to make pots and pans, cotton cloth and metals are the two great staples of English trade.

"1825 Has the general introduction of cotton manufactured goods among higher and middling classes in India induced distress among the weaver and manufacturing population there?—Yes it caused very great distress; as I mentioned in Decca which was the Manchester of India—the distress there has been very great indeed

"1828 Do you think that the consumption of British manufactures in India might be increased?—Yes, I think it might be increased very much

"1829 What in your opinion would tend to improve Indian Market for English manufactures? The first great thing is the continued good Government of the country... for the Mother Country to receive what India has to give in exchange for its manufactures; ...to improve internal communications in India, and to establish a regular communication by steam with the Mother Country... Charles Edward Trevelyn Report from the Select Committee, 1840 pp 108 109

India was thus reduced from the state of a manufacturing to that of an agricultural country; but were they content to stop there? Were they content to exchange their manufactures for the produce of our soil? To make that exchange which naturally takes place between a manufacturing and an agricultural country? No. They imposed a duty equal to about 200 per cent on the prime cost of sugars in India. In the course of excluding sugar, they pursued measures which excluded cotton, another article of raw produce, and they deliberately saw that their Indian subjects received and consumed whatever they were pleased to send them, but with some few exceptions they would receive nothing from them in return. "This would be sufficiently absurd if we were no more than commercial dealers with India," wrote Henry Tucker, "but the absurdity is carried to the extreme when, in the quality of sovereign, we come forward to demand a tribute¹¹ from our territorial possessions."¹²

The exploitation of foreign countries, especially those of Asia and Africa, is the main theme of European colonial history throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. No sooner was India under British control than "the British cotton manufacturers had their attention drawn

¹¹ "The Indian tribute whether weighed in the scales of justice or viewed in the light of our interest will be found to be at variance with humanity, with common sense, and with the received maxim of economical science" - (Major Wingate), India in the Victorian Age, R. Dutt, p. 214.

¹² "Memorials of Indian Government," H. Tucker, p. 195.

2743 Still as it regards the principle of justice is it your opinion that it would be just to equalize the duties? I am of opinion it would, though I do not think there would be any considerable alteration in the system I doubt altogether as far as India is concerned of there being any introduction of Indian cotton goods into this country, but it is a matter of feeling very much towards India and with reference to that I will read what I took down from Mr. Shore, an old Company servant of considerable note in India. He says, "As long as the heavy duties and oppressive imports which the interests of our manufactures in England and the exigencies of Government have placed on their introduction remain the demand for them is not likely to increase." He further observes, "This suppression of the native for British manufactures is often quoted as a splendid instance of the triumph of British skill." It is, he continues, "a much stronger instance of English tyranny and how India has been impoverished by the most vexatious system of customs and duties, imposed for the avowed purpose of favouring the Mother Country." Now, I do not join him in those observations to their full extent but they show what is the feeling of a distinguished Company's servant, and if he made so strong an observation I would put it to the Committee how great a feeling is likely to prevail among the natives themselves.

2744 What is the duty to which silk piece goods imported from India are subject? The duty on silk piece goods is 20 per cent.

2745 What duty are British silks subject to when admitted into Calcutta? A duty of 3½ per cent." C de H. Larperent Report from the Select Committee, 1840, p. 128.

to India as a possible source of supply of raw material for their industry "¹³ The Deccan, especially, with its cotton soil became the most promising of possessions for the purpose of greater output of raw cotton for the English mills. Evidences of the officials and merchants before the Select Committees bring to light the anxiety of English merchants to find the best ways and means of making the Indian soil produce raw materials for their home manufactures¹⁴ The raw cotton exported to England would not only become a source of work to men in England, but the better machine-made and cheaper out-turn of goods would flood the markets of the Deccan as they had done other parts of the country, closing down the hand-made manufactures of the Deccan agriculturists. The ruinous effects of converting India into a market for raw produce, which eventually resulted in extreme poverty and ruination of the ryots, can be best expressed in the words of Mr. Ghandi

"Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages, just the supplement she needed for adding to meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses¹⁵

¹³ "Industrial Evolution of India," D. R. Gadgil, p. 15.

¹⁴ "In the present day, however, we often hear of the country talked of only in the light of a cotton farm whose business should be to supply raw material to England whenever it is required, and to take back her manufactured goods in any quantities the manufacturers choose to send"—"Commerce and Culture of Cotton in India (1851)" J. F. Royle, p. 20

¹⁵ "2751 Is there any colony of this country whose manufactures are admitted on so low a scale as those of India?"—There is no colony of this country whose manufactures are of a magnitude calling for it. We have destroyed the manufactures of India. It is not upon my authority that I state this, but I have the Minutes of the Governor General, Lord William Bentick, of the 30th May, 1829, in which he gave the strongest opinion with regard to the exclusion of British manufactures from India, and the manner in which the British manufactures have superseded the manufactures of India. It is in these words: "No stronger argument can be adduced in favour of the present proposition [settlement of Europeans in India] than is exhibited by the effect which European skill and machinery have produced against the prosperity of India." In the last despatch on the Commercial Department from the India House, dated September 3, 1828, the Court declare that they are at least obliged to abandon the only remaining portion of the trade on cotton manufacture, because, through the intervention of power-looms, the British goods have a decided advantage in quality and price. Cotton piecegoods, for so many ages the staple manufacture of India, seem thus forever lost. The Decca muslin, celebrated over the whole world for its beauty and fineness, is also annihilated for the same cause; nor is the silk trade likely long to escape equal ruin. In the same despatch the Court describes the great depression in price which this article sustained in consequence of the diminished cost of raw material in England, and of the rivalry of British silk handkerchiefs. The sympathy of the Court is deeply excited by the report of the Board of Trade, exhibiting the gloomy picture of the effects of Commercial revolution productive of so much suffering to numerous classes in India, and hardly to be paralleled

"Little do town dwellers know the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and brokerage are sucked up from the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that England and the town dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is unequalled in history."

COTTON AND SILK PART II

In his evidence before the Select Committee, Elphinstone was not quite certain of the extended application of capital to the culture of silk and cotton but in spite of his lack of knowledge on the subject, he was of the opinion that the Company ought to spend more on cotton and sugar¹⁶

We learn that a series of experiments to improve the culture of cotton were ordered by the Court to be carried out in 1829¹⁷. The first steps were instituted in the Southern Maratha Country. Besides these districts, experiments were begun in other parts of the Bombay Deccan. Dr. Gibbon said that the black cotton soil of the Deccan, which was supposed to be the best for the growth of cotton, was an opinion which was hastily formed¹⁸. Captain Wingate observed that the soil in some parts of the eastern districts of the Poona Zilla and more generally in the Sholapur Collectorate, was adapted to the cotton plant but the climate was unfavourable, besides it would be advantageous to these Collectirates to grow more grain because of the ready sale it met with in the flourishing marts of Poona and Sholapur.

in the history of Commerce "Report From the Select Committee 1840 p. 128

¹⁶"Is sugar cultivated, or could it be cultivated, to any great extent in the country?—Sugar is cultivated in various parts of the Deccan. There are very few parts of India where there are means of irrigation where sugar could not be cultivated" (Chaplin), "East India Papers 1830" p. 179

¹⁷Are there any products which could be profitably raised in the Dukhun for exportation?—Sugar to a great extent; there are four kinds of sugar-cane in the Dukhun.

"Do you think that the sugar, under the present regulation, could be raised at such a price as to compete with the best Indian sugar in the market?" I should think so, from the price of the field labour varying from 1d. to 4d per diem" "Evidence Before the Select Committee 1832" p. 179.

¹⁸"Commerce and Culture of Cotton in India T. F. Royle p. 341

¹⁹Ibid p. 342

In Khandesh, the only direct measure that had been attempted till 1849, for the encouragement of the growth of cotton, had been a purchase made in 1832 of the produce to the amount of Rs.20,000 by which a temporary stimulus to prices had been given—"no permanent benefit was attained," except an occasional distribution of foreign seed, from which nothing satisfactory had resulted.

In 1830, in order to encourage the cultivation of cotton in Poona, Sholapur and Ahmednagar, the Bombay Government consented to declare all lands, whether irrigated or otherwise, on which cotton was cultivated, to be entirely free from land tax, and that no assessment would be levied for five years, or until the 30th April of 1842.¹⁹ The Government of India disapproved of this measure, and was supported by the Court of Directors, whereon the resolution was withdrawn; but "the rights of the individual to whom the faith of the Government had been pledged, and who had either established a claim to, or had received a remission of assessment previously to the revocation of the notices, must not of course be interfered with." Thus generous attitude gave the Government the opportunity to realise whether enthusiasm for the growth of cotton had taken place or not.

"The Proclamation during the two years it was in force," wrote Royle, "had very little effect, and was not likely ever to have had much. Indeed we learn that those who had obtained the grant, never obtained good or profitable crops. The climate is in fact too dry for the successful culture of either indigenous or American cotton; for even when Government have not only remitted the rent but paid all the ex-

¹⁹"1870 Have you paid any attention to the question in what parts of India different species of cotton can be cultivated?—When I was acting-secretary to the Board of Revenue in India, I read a mass of papers consisting of answers from the different Collectors and Commissioners to queries sent out by the Court of Directors with a view to improvement of cotton cultivation; and the conclusions I came to were, that to remit land tax, with a view to its encouragement, would lead to certain sacrifice of revenue with only a doubtful prospect of its increasing or improving the growth of cotton. Sir Robert Grant, for instance, directed a remission of revenue to be made in favour of cotton cultivation in the Bombay Presidency, if that order had been allowed to stand, the effect of it would have been to turn the whole of the Bombay Presidency into a great cotton field, and while there would have been a great sacrifice of revenue, no more cotton would have probably grown upon the whole. Something may be done toward the improvement of the cultivation and preparation of cotton by agricultural societies and bonuses; something may be done by making new roads, but the only effectual means in our power is by slow but certain operation of good laws, and of a just and prompt administration of them, by which security of property, and a free application of capital and skill to the improvement of the production of the country, will be promoted"—(Charles Edward Trevelyn), "Report From the Select Committee, 1840," p. 111.

penses of an experiment, they have been unable to produce any effect in an unsuitable climate ”

About 1851, Mr. Courtney, the Collector of Poona, wrote that the Indapur taluka was the only one in his Collectorate in which cotton was grown, and that experience had shown that neither the climate nor the soil of the Western Deccan was suited to the growth of that plant²⁰

In 1851-52, an experiment in different parts of Sholapur district was carried out by sowing 238 acres with New Orleans cotton, but apparently without much success²¹. Some ryots again tried the following year, and this time 1,739 acres were sold, but that year the crops failed, so that in the succeeding year (1853-54), only 675 acres were sold. In Barsi, the price of cotton was about Rs.65 for a khandi of 784 lbs.²². The American war (1862-65) greatly increased the average output of cotton in Sholapur²³.

The expense of conveying cotton at this time from Sholapur and Barsi to Panvel, a distance of 200 miles, was according to Dr. Royle about Rs.9 to Rs.10 per khandi. The cotton trade had been hampered by undeveloped means of communication, and by oppressive taxation; the cultivators were impoverished and unable to adopt improved methods of cultivation.²⁴ They were without means of adequately irrigating their lands; and the works which once existed for that purpose were, in too many instances, permitted to sink into decay. The almost entire absence of roads and bridges hindered its reaching the sea-coast, and for want of harbours and piers, it could hardly be shipped to any market²⁵. But with the construction of roads and railways, the cultivators

20 Quoted in "Commerce and Culture of Cotton in India," Royle, p. 230.

21 "Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 230.

22 See Royle, p. 237.

23 "Then came the American Civil War, the ports of the south were closed, and there was a cotton famine in Lancashire. Naturally the English manufacturer turned to India. The effects of this creation of a sudden demand for Indian cotton were truly enormous"—"Industrial Evolution in India," D. R. Gadgil, pp. 15, 16.

24 "Western India," Editor's Preface, p. xix.

25 "So long as those difficulties exist—and very little has yet been done to overcome them—it can scarcely be expected that the supply of cotton from India to this country will increase much in quantity, or be of a quality fit for general consumption. The imports of Indian cotton into this country in three years ending 1849 were greater than in any three years previous to 1849. During the last few years our imports have increased in consequence of the high prices which have ruled in this market and the unsettled state of China. The same obstacles which thus hinder the development of the cotton trade must prove adverse to the increase of every other, must keep the people in a state of indolence and poverty, and prevent the country from making any advance in wealth and population"—"Western India," p. xix.

were also quick to seize the opportunity for making extra profits. At Sholapur, about 1856, the cotton sent by road and rail amounted to 28,000 full-pressed bales, and 80,000 bundles a year.²⁶ Regarding cotton trade between 1866 to 1868, large quantities, or nearly three-fourths, were bought up by the local lingevat bania dealers of the cotton growing districts.

Captain Pottinger had found in 1822 only about 2,500 bighas of his vast Collectorate of Ahmednagar under cotton cultivation. Ahmednagar was certainly not a cotton district, both its soil and rainfall did not favour the growth and culture of cotton at all. Years later, the Collector Mr. Spooner, also reported that there were only 2,633 acres of cotton cultivation, that the soil did not appear suitable, and that what was grown was chiefly in small patches and intended more for the use of the inhabitants than for exchange. In 1830, an enterprising Hindu merchant tried with a Government loan of Rs 50,000 to supply cotton, and succeeded fairly well.²⁷ In 1836, we had already noted the Government encouragement to the growth of cotton, but the husbandmen found grain more paying. In 1840, Dr Gibbon was satisfied that only New Orleans cotton seed would suit the Ahmednagar soil, and experiments with foreign cotton, or even Egyptian, would only mean useless expenditure.²⁸ In 1844, as in 1822, the Collector was of the opinion that cotton would only flourish in a small tract in the south near the Bhima, and that even there it would suffer in this Collectorate from want of rain.²⁹ In 1843, it was found that all who took Government loans lost by their venture, so that till 1850 there was no cultivation and scarcely any trade in cotton worth the name.³⁰ Up to 1860-61 a small import from Paithan and Barsi served to meet the demand of local weavers.

With the outbreak of the American war, Ahmednagar also received a stimulus in its poor cotton culture, and from that time cotton cultivation spread. Bombay merchants began to visit Ahmednagar and a cotton market was started. During this period Ahmednagar exported 50,000 bundles equal to about 3,400 full pressed 400 lb. bales a year.³¹

26 "Sholapur Gazetteer," p. 261

27 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer" p. 270

28 Ibid p. 271

29 Ibid.

30 Revenue Record No. 1564 of 1844, p. 54

31 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 343

In 1843, at the suggestion of the Resident, Sir Bartle Frere, Mr. Vary was sent to Sattara to introduce New Orleans and other varieties of cotton and to set up cotton ginnings. The possibility of an increased growth of cotton in Sattara was inquired into by the Government of Bombay from Mr. Frere by way of a number of queries.

On enquiry as to what was the price of cotton free from seeds in the principal marts of the district, it was found to be at its lowest at Rs.1½ at Akalkot, and the highest at Rs 12-6-0 at Islampur between Karad and Kholapur. In every case the price greatly depended on the distance to a tolerable road from the nearest seaport. Regarding the price at which the ryot sold his cotton clean or unclean, he was generally dependent upon the advances of the moneylenders, still cotton was usually grown without advances. The ryots usually sold their cotton ready clean. The cost of cleaning the cotton by the foot-roller (*churka*) varied from 1½ anna to Rs 1-2-0 per maund. The cost of conveying cotton to the nearest port for shipment was

	Miles	Rupees per Pucca Maund or 40 Seers
Sattara to Mhat	60	0-10- 0
Pandharpur to Chiplun	120	0-13- 0
Karad to Chiplun	50	0-10- 0
Ashte to Rajapur	60	0-10- 0
Nimbosri to Rajapur	80	1- 4- 0
Sowraj to Rajapur	80	1- 4- 0
Alptee to Chiplun	90	2-15- 3
Omnd to Chiplun	60	2- 8- 6
Akalkot to Panvel	275	0-14- 0
Fath to Rajapur	120	2- 4- 0

It was to be noted, that the cost of transport to ports of shipment did not depend so much on mere distance as on the extent of the return trade from the port to the interior. The average produce of cotton per bigha (acre) varied in different parts of the district from half a maund to twelve maunds per bigha, the latter being a very rare crop. The average was estimated at from one to nine maunds. The total number of bighas then under cultivation throughout the country was given at 21,561½ bighas, and the utmost extent of cultivation possible was estimated at 39,018 bighas, or about double of the then quantity of land under cotton cultivation. These answers give us a fairly clear idea of the capabilities of Sattara as a cotton producing centre.³² The same type of information was then requested of other Collectorates.³³

³² Quoted by Dr. Royle, p. 392.

³³ Mr. Townsend in reference to the information supplied on the same queries by the other Collectors of the Deccan observed

"The replies of the Collectors to the Honourable Court's first question do not very much vary, the price of clean cotton, as stated by the Poona Col-

In Khandesh in 1831, the best cotton came from the north-east subdivision and Mr Boyd was ordered to give every attention to the cultivation and cleaning of cotton. From 1833 to 1837, we have very little information on the culture and trade in cotton in Khandesh, but in 1837 the culture of cotton seems to have improved to such a degree that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce declared it better than any Broach receipt in Bombay.³⁴ The area under cotton cultivation in 1837 was 90,750 acres, but in 1838 there was a decrease of 23,757 acres. In 1840, Mr Grant with a Government loan of Rs 50,000 turned out a cotton crop amounting to 1,785 tons or nearly 20 per cent above the average produce of the previous twelve years.³⁵

In the year 1845, the experimental culture of cotton was commenced in Khandesh. The American planters, Messrs Blount and Simpson, having completed their engagements with the Bengal and Madras Governments offered their services to that of Bombay.³⁶ Mr Blount,

lector is less than that of other Collectors which is not what might have been expected, but the statement of price is necessarily only an approximation to the truth and cannot be viewed as a certainty.

The replies to the second question vary pretty largely even in the same Collectorates, according to the various circumstances by which the same is attended. This may explain the great difference between the reply of the Collector of Poona and Ahmednagar on this point; a reference was made to the Collector of Ahmednagar on this along with other points of difference. Mr Spooner in his reply dated December 13, explains that 'the cotton cultivation in that zilla is exceedingly trifling and that, therefore, it is difficult to obtain any very satisfactory information in reply to the queries proposed.'

The replies of the Collectors to the fourth question very closely coincide excepting that of Ahmednagar. The nearness of Poona to Panvel is probably counterbalanced by the greater demand for carriage at so large a station, and its consequent greater price. When at Baisi I questioned some traders, and their answers very closely tallied with the reply given to this question by the Collector of Sholapur. I found that owing to the badness of the road between the last trading town and Poona, bullocks were still very much used in preference to carts as it was necessary to lead the latter very lightly owing to ruts and inequalities of the ground. This must hinder the cotton trade and render the article more expensive in transit.

As regards the 5th question the produce per acre,³⁷ the replies of the Collectors vary considerably. Either the estimate of Poonah and Sholapur must be too high, or those of Belgaum and Dharwar too low.

'The 6th and 7th questions show the present cultivation and its possible or probable expense, the latter, of course, must depend on cotton proving a remunerative crop or otherwise, its doing so well, I submit, largely depends on its being well and cheaply cleansed and cheaply conveyed to market; the former will be proved for, so far as Government can do it, by an abundant supply of saw guns; the latter depends wholly on the formation of some good roads and bridges between the cotton country and the coast'. Dr Royle, pp 405, 440

³⁴ "Khandesh Gazetteer," p. 220

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ 'Commerce and Culture of Cotton in India,' Royle, p. 388.

having arrived at Poona, was directed to proceed to "the fertile province of Khandesh." After the loss of the American colonies, England was anxious to experiment the growth of a better type of American cotton on Indian soil, hence the invitation to American experts. How far these Americans were anxious to see India take the place of the lost colonies may be gathered from the evidence of one Mr L. R. Reid³⁷ before the Select Committee of the House of Lords-

"2582: Have they had any persons from America to teach them the process?—Several Americans have been sent out from England by the Court of Directors, and have superintended establishments under the Government

"2583: Do you know what their opinion was of the quality of the cotton? I do not think much faith was to be placed upon their opinion, they never seemed to me to enter with much spirit into the undertaking.

"2584: As if they did not much wish it to succeed? - As if they did not much wish it to succeed"³⁸

The reason for this indifference by the Americans is not far to seek, the very idea that if these experiments succeeded the American cotton market would suffer in England, was in itself a powerful factor to account for the lukewarm attitude of these experts

"2586 What are in your opinion, the chief obstacles to the cultivation of Indian cotton? The great obstacle is the smallness of the price which is obtained for it

"2587. Does not the smallness of the price depend upon the inferior quality of the article? - The smallness of the price depends upon the price of American cotton with which it comes into competition

³⁷ "2431 Will you have the goodness to state how long you were in India, and what official situation you held there? - I was in India nearly 32 years, I entered the Company's service on May 1, 1817. In 1826 I was appointed by Mr. Elphinstone, who was then Governor to act as Secretary to the Government in the Territorial Department. In 1827 I was appointed Collector and Magistrate of the Southern Division of the Konkan. In 1830, the whole of the Konkan. In 1831, I held for a short time the situation of Revenue Commissioner, and subsequently in 1838 became Chief Secretary. In 1841 I was called into the council on a temporary vacancy, and in 1844 I took my seat, under the appointment of the Court of Directors, as a Member of the Council. I remained in this position till I left India in March 1849, with the exception of six months in 1846-47 during which I became Governor of Bombay."—"Select Committee, 1852," p. 255

³⁸ "Report From the Select Committee of the House of Lords 1852, p. 267

"2588: And the expense of the freight on account of the great distance it has to be brought?—Yes, I imagine also that one cause is the difference in the quantum of production in America and in India

"2596: If sufficient means of conveyance were provided, do you think that Indian cotton could compete in our market with the American?—I do not see why it should not, if care be likewise taken in its preparation."³⁹

In the season of 1816-17, cultivation of New Orleans cotton was tried in Khandesh, at Dharangaon, Jalgaon, and in the talukas of Firdudole and Nusserabad. At the conclusion of the season, Mr Blount left for America and Mr Mercer took leave for a year, so that only Mr Simpson remained to take charge of the experiment in Khandesh. On Mr Simpson's retirement in 1843, Mr Elphinstone, who took the warmest interest in the culture of cotton, was appointed Collector in Khandesh. Mr Elphinstone was satisfied with Mr Simpson's exertions. "The Province," wrote Elphinstone, "is very thinly inhabited and there is a great deal of waste land, therefore not only would the quantity of cotton capable of being sent to England be greatly increased from the waste now unreclaimed but also from the land under present cultivation."⁴⁰ Elphinstone continued the planting of New Orleans cotton, and was able to write in 1849 that "the natives were so satisfied at the relative superiority of the exotic plant that they came forward in large numbers this year to sow its seeds, and if this impression remains, we shall go on increasing our American sort of cotton, I am confident of success."⁴¹ In answer to the queries of the Court of Directors as regards the successful culture of cotton in Khandesh, Elphinstone observed that it was difficult to say what might have been the actual increase of cotton in Khandesh if there were a permanent remunerative demand, but he was sanguine that it would be very great because there was a vast quantity of land, both waste and cultivated with grain, which under encouraging circumstances without creating scarcity of grain, could be converted into cotton fields. Hence the years 1846, 1848 and 1850 were mainly spent in experiments for a better production of Khandesh cotton.⁴² Khandesh was perhaps one of the few bright spots in the gloomy picture of this large scale experimentation in cotton culture.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 267, 268

⁴⁰ Quoted from Dr Rovle p. 392

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 395

⁴² "Khandesh Gazetteer" p. 220

in India during the fifties of the last century Mr E. Thornton⁴³ before the Select Committee in 1853, was of the opinion that even in spite of the aid of American experts, looking at the results it did not appear that there had been any increase in the export of cotton from India⁴⁴.

From 1860, renewed efforts were made to improve Khandesh cotton.⁴⁵ By 1866 there was evidence⁴⁶ to show that the Khandesh cotton had improved immensely. The Report of the Chamber of Commerce (1865) stated that the new cotton promised to supersede the best variety of indigenous cotton in the Presidency which would entitle Khandesh cotton to rank with the best. The well-known Messrs. Bruce and Co.⁴⁸ wrote in 1865 that immense improvement had taken place in Khandesh cotton, and from having long held the lowest place in the list of indigenous cotton, it now promised to rank next to the American variety. It was valued at Rs 150 per candy against Rs 350 of the previous year.

Such was the impetus given by the American war to the culture of cotton in Khandesh, which was perhaps the only cotton producing Collectorate, next to Sholapur, in the Bombay Deccan. This impetus was as transitory as the prosperity that followed it. The Collector, Mr. Ashburner, wrote in 1866, that the cultivation of cotton that season would be much reduced and it was not owing to the enhanced price of seeds or to want of available land, but to the commercial prices and the depressed state of the cotton market. The depressed conditions had already begun to influence the cotton trade in May and June of 1865, no sooner had the American war ended the price of cotton had then fallen to Rs.13 per pulla, and the prospects of trade were so uncertain that merchants would not make any advance to the ryot on their cotton crop.⁴⁹ The Collector said that, under the circumstances, nothing could be done to extend the cultivation or affect the market. The fact was that a permanent and remunerative price was the only prize that would influence an agricultural population to cultivate cotton or any other crop, ex-

⁴³ Head of the Statistical Department of the India House.

⁴⁴ "Third Report From the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 1853," p. 9.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ "Khandesh Gazetteer," p. 220.

⁴⁷ Letter of February 22, 1866.

⁴⁸ Managers of the East India Cotton Agency.

⁴⁹ Letter of February 22, 1866.

These early efforts and experiments, though prompted by two selfish aims, the one to replace the American cotton by Indian, and the other to tide over the difficult times of the American Civil War, were not a complete waste.

"2597. Do your observations respecting the non-improvement of the quality of cotton within your experience apply generally to the mass of cotton that is produced in the country, or do they apply also to the results of the experiments which have been made for the improvement of cotton?"—I have no doubt a great deal has been done by those experiments in as much as New Orleans cotton has been introduced in our southern districts to a very large extent of late years.

"2598. Is that near the sea? No, in the southern plain of the Deccan.

"2599. Are you of the opinion that in those cases in which peculiar care has been taken, and new seed has been introduced, an improved quality of cotton has been introduced into India? There can be no question of this, cotton of a very good quality has been produced."

Selfish aims and personal interests were responsible for the failure of the experiments in cotton culture. But the greatest and most lasting good which resulted from these endeavours was the improvement of means of communications especially the roads from the interior leading to the sea coast. It was somewhere in the fifties of the last century that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce sent Mr Mackay to India to suggest the best means to accelerate the culture and export of cotton from Western India.⁵¹ Mr Mackay said that the best way to stimulate the progress of cotton in the Bombay Deccan would be to give the cotton planters every facility as regards transport and roads.⁵² These proposals, coupled with the new survey which required for its suc-

⁵⁰ "Report From the Select Committee, 1852," p. 268.

⁵¹ See "Western India" by Alexander Mackay.

⁵² "2591. Your opinion is that the great distance which the cotton has to be brought is the chief obstacle to the progress of cultivation? The great difficulty is bringing the cotton in a marketable state to market." (L. R. Reid), "Select Committee, 1852," p. 267.

"7536. Do you suppose the argument would be equally applicable if the communications with cotton districts were improved? There is no doubt about it."—(E. Thornton), "Third Report From the Select Committee, 1852," p. 10.

"1836. Do facilities exist for exportable productions of India, by means of improved internal communications? I think that something may be done in that way."—(C. E. Trevelyn), "Report From the Select Committee, 1840," p. 115.

cess the same road facilities, went a long way in making the Bombay Government undertake liberal schemes for good communications, thanks to cotton culture and its experiments.

SILK

In 1826, Captain Robertson requested Mr Chaplin to sanction a sum of Rs 177 as expenditure for rearing silk worms at Poona. He had about 50,000 of these insects spinning silk, but he feared that the attempt would fail since there was a scarcity of mulberry trees, the leaves of which were the only food the worms would eat. As three kinds of mulberry trees thrived very well in the soil and climate of Poona, he recommended to the Commissioner that it would not be worth while planting portions of "sheere" lands of the Government with mulberry trees with a view to further introduction of the silk worms. It required more energy and capital than the ryots possessed to venture on an experiment of the sort proposed until they had had a practical demonstration of its success and profit⁵³. Captain Robertson was not sufficiently aware of the qualities of the silk produced to state whether it was good or bad.

The Commissioner, when sanctioning the required sum, apprehended that as a Government venture the rearing of insects might not succeed, however, so desirable an object ought not, if ultimately attainable, to be relinquished. He therefore requested Captain Robertson to endeavour to introduce the plantation of mulberry trees on a small scale as he had proposed. In the meantime, Mr Chaplin would refer the subject for the consideration of Government⁵⁴.

In the same year, Mr Dunlop wrote to the Commissioner from Khandesh that they had endeavoured with some success, to breed silk worms from eggs supplied by Captain Robertson from Poona, with a view to inducing the inhabitants to engage in the production of silk; but they had been unable to wind off the silk from the cocoons, and unless that difficulty could be overcome, the attempt would have to be abandoned. Mr Dunlop therefore requested Government to procure a person, acquainted with that part of the process, to instruct his people, or he would send a basket of the dried cocoons as specimens for having their quality ascertained. It was not improbable that their difficulty might have arisen from some defect in the production itself⁵⁵.

⁵³ Letter No. 2591 of January 13, 1826.

⁵⁴ Letter No. 9863 of January 14, 1826.

⁵⁵ Letter No. 2499 of March 31, 1826.

Four years ('330) later, both the Commissioners (Elphinstone and Chaplin) were of the opinion, when questioned by the Select Committee, that silk should be one of the articles on which capital ought to be applied for development. Chaplin stated that he had seen experiments in silk tried in the Deccan, but there was not a sufficient quantity of mulberry trees to extend it⁵⁶.

In 1832, Colonel Sykes, when questioned as to what other articles besides sugar could be profitably exported said silk and coffee, to a limited extent, and indigo. Asked if silk had been raised in the Deccan, he said it had, and was, besides, improving. Under what circumstances was it raised? How was it managed? He replied that it was in the hands of a very few people, and there was some difficulty in extending it for want of capitalists⁵⁷.

During these early years, Captain Pottinger had undertaken silk culture at Ahmednagar also, by planting in his garden about eighty-five yards of mulberry hedge, and rearing silk worms which produced thirty-three tolas of superior silk. In 1830, to encourage the growth still further, two natives were each granted by Government a loan of Rs 500 without interest, and each was given twenty bighas of rent-free land.⁵⁸ A third loan of Rs 1,000 had also been given to another native, but all these attempts ended in failure⁵⁹. In the same year (1830), another costly experiment was carried out by Dr Graham, the Civil Surgeon, and a sum of Rs 3,000 was advanced to him. Up to the end of 1831, Dr Graham was busy planting mulberry trees. In the course of his experiment he was aided by a Chinese and a Bengali convict, both skilled workers of silk, placed at his disposal by Government. By 1832-33 it was found that the mulberry trees suffered due to lack of water. In spite of this difficulty, the doctor continued planting till he had some 1,500 trees, when he fell ill and left for England. Dr. Straker continued the experiment, but with little success, and as the worms were badly reared they yielded silk only in small quantities⁶⁰.

In 1837 Senor Mutti was appointed superintendent of silk culture in the Deccan⁶¹. He established a nursery, among other places, at Ahmed-

56 "East India Papers, 1830," p. 179

57 "Evidence Before the Select Committee, 1832," p. 179

58 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 277

59 *Ibid.*

60 Revenue Record No. 1561 of 1844, p. 57

61 "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 278

nagar and Yeola in Nasik. He turned grasslands into mulberry gardens, and offered a premium in order to encourage husbandmen and others to plant mulberry trees, and taught them how to rear and treat the plantation.

Prior to the advent of the British, Yeola in Nasik was the most important silk centre. "The manufacture of silk at Yeola dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century."⁶² The monopoly of silk was held by a Maratha named Rajhoji Naik in the days of the last Peshwa so that any new comers could not start silk looms in Yeola except by paying the original settler a fine of Rs 350. This monopoly was respected by the British till 1837, when a series of appeals were made against it before the Collector and Commissioner by the Gujarati settlers who were desirous of opening silk weaving. It was decided by the sub-judge's court in 1818 that the monopoly should be set aside. Since then many classes of outsiders took to silk weaving in Nasik.

Dr. Graham's garden had in the meantime passed to one Mr. Fenwick who, in 1812, had no less than 15,000 trees. In the same year, due to neglect, only 52 lbs of silk were made. With such poor results, it was not likely that the growth of mulberry trees would be popular. Not even the promise of five year's remission of rent could induce the people to plant mulberry trees.⁶³ "By the July of 1815, due to a lack of knowledge," says the *Gazetteer*, "and mismanagement, yielded by some defect in the soil, the whole experiment was admitted to be a failure." Even Senor Mutti's undertaking was abandoned by 1818.

We have thus traced the culture of cotton and silk in the Bombay Deccan from the scanty information that lay at our disposal. The former received an impetus during the American war, but it was only a transitory phase in the life of the cotton agriculturist, for no sooner was the American war ended than England turned to the superior cotton of America, on the other hand, the silk industry completely failed, partly due to lack of knowledge and partly due to the criminal neglect of those entrusted with the promotion of its culture.

End of Part I

⁶² "Nasik Gazetteer," p. 155.

⁶³ "Ahmednagar Gazetteer," p. 280.

KARNATAK

PART II

INTRODUCTION

IN A VOTE OF THANKS TO THE ARMY AND THE SERVANTS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, AFTER THE TERMINATION OF THE WAR WITH BAJI RAO II, MR. CANNING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THUS ALLUDED TO THE SERVICES OF GENERAL MUNRO:

"At the southern extremity of this long line of operation and in the part of the campaign carried on in a district far from the public gaze . . . was employed a man whose name I should indeed have been sorry to have passed over in silence. I allude to Colonel Thomas Munro, a gentleman of whose rare qualifications the late House of Commons had opportunities of judging at the bar. . . He went into the field with not more than five or six hundred men, of whom a very small proportion were Europeans, and marched into the Maratha territories, to take possession of the country which had been ceded to us by the Treaty of Poona. The population which he subjugated by arms, he managed with such address, equity and wisdom, that he established an Empire over their hearts and feelings."¹

Such was the man to whom was entrusted the conquest of the Southern Maratha Country. His great contemporary, Elphinstone, who had undertaken to write Munro's life, when studying his letters for that purpose, had recorded in his diary (Feb 15, 1830) that Munro's "judgment and sagacity at nineteen were as superior to those of ordinary people as they were to those of his contemporaries when his reputation was more extensive." Those documents were a testimony to his many accomplishments which were concealed "by his modesty and that delicacy of taste and tenderness of feeling which lay hid under his plain and somewhat stern demeanour." Just after the Maratha Campaign of 1818, in appreciation of General Munro's services, Sir Malcolm wrote to Mr. Adams:² "I send you a copy of a public letter from Tom Munro Saheb. . . If this letter makes the same impression upon you that it did upon me, we shall all recede as this extraordinary man comes forward.

. The country comes into his hands by the most legitimate of all modes, the zealous and spirited efforts of the natives to place themselves under his rule. . . His popularity in the quarter where he is placed is the result of long experience of his talents and virtue, and rests exactly upon that basis of which an able and good man may be proud."²

¹ "Sir Thomas Munro," J. Bradshaw, pp. 174, 175

² Secretary to the Government of India Letter of Feb 13, 1818

² Gleig's "Life of Munro," p. 503

Even before the hostilities had broken out (1817), Baji Rao had directed the Southern Maratha chiefs to re-occupy the districts ceded by the Treaty of Poona, and had ordered Kasirao Gokhale, his Governor, to support the chiefs. The country was studded with forts,³ all of which though not very strong and impregnable were secure against hasty assault. These forts were capable of embarrassing the movements of Munro's army, and were filled with the Peshwa's adherents.⁴ It was in face of these obstacles that Munro, who was promoted General (29th November 1817), had to conduct himself.

Before the 18th January, 1818, the whole of the territory south of the Malprabha was completely subjugated by General Munro. Munro remained at Dharwar till the 4th February, organising his forces and bringing the conquered country to order. It was about the 10th of the same month that the English took Sattara, and by a Proclamation deposed the Peshwa and annexed his dominions. The scene of General Munro's exploits was shifted first to Bijapur, then to Belgaum, and finally before the fort of Sholapur, until his successful campaign ended on the 15th May, 1818, with the reduction of that strong fortress.

The important fortress of Badami was assaulted on the 5th February, and a breach was created thirteen days later. In the morning of the

³ No. 22

Camp at Hooblee,
Oct 23. 1818

To the Hon'ble M. Elphinstone
Sir,

I have the honour to receive your letter regarding the forts in the Southern Mahratta Country

Agreeably to the desire expressed in your letter, the fort of Belgaum Gudduk, Dummull, Badamee and Baggreekotta have been transferred with their Sibbundee Garrison to the immediate authority of the Brigadier General.

The materials at present in my possession regarding the different forts throughout the country are neither sufficiently full, nor accurate to enable me to offer any suggestion as to the expediency of retaining, or demolishing them—but I shall lose no time in furnishing General Pritchett with all the information . . . The generality of forts in the open country, are so necessary for the protection of persons and property of the inhabitants against predatory horses, that it would in my opinion be impolitic to destroy them. The decay of such forts in the ceded districts was last year found to be a very serious inconvenience, and it enabled the Pindaries to penetrate the Company's Districts and to make an impression which was quite impracticable on this side of the Toongbudrah, where almost every village was sufficiently fortified to resist these marauders. Some of the hill forts which command the passes to the west of Belgaum ought, I think, to be dismantled for, as long as they remain upon the present footing, our authority there must be considered to be very imperfectly established. Paurgurh—the last of the forts that gave in—is but nominally in our possession....(The rest of the letter was torn.)

⁴ "Maratha War," Blacker, p. 286, and "Life of Munro," Gleig, p. 475

same day (18th February), the fortifications were successfully carried, and Badami was captured. These Badami fortifications were larger and more regular than those of Dharwar, and made the fortress deservedly esteemed as one of the strongest of hill forts in that part of the country. Bagulkote surrendered without any resistance, and Munro's march from then onwards was so triumphant that by the 17th May, 1818, the whole of Bijapur passed into the hands of the British.

The town of Belgaum was taken possession of on 20th March, 1818, to gain cover as near to the fort as possible. The fort surrendered, after a siege, on 12th April, 1818. The fall of Belgaum completed the conquest of the Peshwa's territory south of the Krishna. None of the Jagirdars resisted and no more fighting remained. On General Munro's recommendation, Mr. Chaplin, Collector of Belari, was appointed under Mr. Elphinstone, the Principal Collector of the Maratha country, south of the Krishna.

Not merely the conduct of the war, but the civil administration of all the provinces which he had obtained by conquest or cession, devolved on General Munro. Every question connected with the settlement of claims, the adjustment of the revenue, and the administration of justice was referred to him. The good Sir Munro was of the opinion that they should proceed patiently, and, as their knowledge of the manners and customs of the people and the nature and resources of the country increased, they must frame gradually for the existing institutions such a system as might advance the prosperity of the country, and be satisfactory to the people. The knowledge most necessary for that end was that of landed property and its assessment. On its fair and moderate assessment depended the comfort and happiness of the people.⁵

Unlike Elphinstone, the generous hearted Munro was one of those few Englishmen of his time who had the courage to state that the Indians should be entrusted with important offices in the state. "We are arrogant enough," he wrote, "to suppose that we can, with our limited numbers, do the work of a nation. Had we ten times more we should only do it so much worse." The natives in his estimation possessed, in as high a degree at least as the Europeans, all those qualifications which were requisite for the discharge of those inferior duties at which they were employed. They were, in general, better accountants, more patient and laborious, more intimately acquainted with the country, the manners and customs of the people, and above all more efficient men of busi-

⁵ Minutes by Sir T. Munro, Dec. 31, 1824 Appendix No. 105, p. 454.

ness.⁶ What could be said of their paternal Government, said Munro, if they excluded from every important office the natives of the country, and dispossessed them of even so much authority "as to order the punishment of a single stroke of the ratten?" They professed as administrators to seek the improvement of the country, but proposed means most adverse to success. "No conceit more wild and absurd than this was engendered in the darkest ages." Fame, power and wealth had been in every age and country the stimulus to the pursuit of knowledge. How could it then be expected, wrote Munro, that the Hindus would be eager in the pursuit of science unless they had some inducement? "Let Britain be subjugated by a foreign power tomorrow," he wrote, "let the people be excluded from all share in the government, from public honours, from every office of trust or emolument, and let them in every situation be considered as unworthy of trust, and all their knowledge, and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming, in another generation or two, a low-minded, deceitful and dishonest race."

It cannot be denied that Sir Thomas Munro embodied in him the best traditions of his race. He had not merely faith in his convictions, but the courage to assert them before his masters. And though, like Elphinstone, he was proud that Britain had at last brought security from the calamities both of foreign wars and internal commotions, that personal property was more secure from violence, yet he asserted that there were several disadvantages of their rule. The Indians had no share in making laws for themselves, little in administrating them; they could not rise to a high station, civil or military; they were regarded as an inferior race, and "often rather as vassals and servants than as the ancient owners and masters of the country."⁷ Such were the facts openly left on record by that eminent Englishman. Few men can have that keen sense of justice, and very few, indeed, can have that courage, unselfishness and disinterested outlook regarding their future, to tell their superiors with passionate ardour the faults of their administration.

⁶ Minutes by Sir T. Munro, Dec 31, 1821, pp. 466, 467.

⁷ Minutes by Sir T. Munro, Dec 31, 1824, p. 474.

"42 We would look upon India not as a temporary possession but as one which is to be maintained permanently, until the natives shall, in some future age, have abandoned most of their superstition and prejudices, and become sufficiently enlightened to frame a regular government for themselves, and conduct and preserve it. Whenever such a time shall arrive, it will probably be best for both countries that British control over India should be gradually withdrawn" F. Munro.

The shattered state of his health compelled General Munro to leave his appointment in the Southern Maratha Country, and in the autumn of 1818 he returned to Madras. His place was taken by William Chaplin of the Madras Civil Service. Between 1819 and 1824 the district enjoyed a quiet period.

Among the events that took place in the course of the succeeding years were the two important risings at Kittur,⁸ one in 1824 and the other in 1829. The unseemly conduct of the Napani chief, Appa Saheb, was punished in 1831 by the refusal on the part of the Government to acknowledge his adopted heir after his death.

In 1826, the question arose whether the district of Dharwar and the states under it should continue under Bombay, or be transferred to the Madras Presidency. After much correspondence between the two Governments, the Court of Directors decided in 1830 that the Karnatak districts should continue to form a part of the Bombay Presidency. The territories were formed into one Collectorate called Dharwar District or *zilla*. This included, besides the present Collectorate, parts of the present Belgaum, Bijapur and Sholapur districts.

The whole of the Southern Maratha Country continued to function as the Dharwar Collectorate, or more popularly, as found in the documents during the years 1818-1826, as the "Carnatic." On the 28th April, 1836, the Collectorate of Dharwar was divided into two Collectorates: the Northern and Southern. On the recommendation of the Collector, Mr. Dunlop, then acting as such at Dharwar, the Belgaum Collectorate was made to consist of ten subdivisions: Parasgad, Sampgoan, Padshapur, Chikodi, Bagulkote, Indi, Middbihal, Hungund, Badami and Bedi. Mr. Ravencroft, the first Assistant Collector, took charge of Belgaum Collectorate on the 3rd May, 1836. Soon after the formation of this new Collectorate, the talukas of Indi and Middbihal were transferred to the new Collectorate of Sholapur.

Government had decided to deny the privileges of adoption to certain estate-holders, as it was considered desirable to reduce the area of alienated land as much as possible. Accordingly, the first estates to lapse were those of Chinchani in 1836. They included the taluka of Gokak and several separate villages. On the death of the Napani Desai, as previously noted, in 1839 his military estates were resumed and

⁸ A number of letters in the Deccan Commissioner's files give us detailed information of the uprising at Kittur in 1824, leading to the death of Mr. Thackeray, the then Principal Collector and Political Agent.

divided among Dharwar, Belgaum and Sholapur. The parts which fell to Belgaum were Athni and Honvad, and the flourishing town of Napani. Dharwar received the 13 villages of Annigeri which were added to the district.

In 1818 Bijapur, now a part of the Karnatak, was given over to the newly restored Raja of Sattara. South Bijapur was in a ruinous condition. This ruination was partly due to the disintegration of the Maratha rule at the close of the eighteenth century, and partly to the farming system of Baji Rao introduced in 1810. At the opening of the British rule, the villages near the Krishna, Ghatprabha and Malprabha (especially at the meeting of the latter two with the former), had been the scene of Maratha raids, and were miserably poor. The country was almost denuded. Every foot of rich black soil, whether assessed or free, was crowded with thorn bushes twenty feet high, the haunts of tigers, and so dense that there was scarcely room for a foot-path. The people, it appears, were far better off at the beginning of Baji Rao's rule than at the end of it. They had been completely ruined by the rapacious contractors of the late Government. Under the last Peshwa, the destruction of property had been complete. So difficult was this part of the country to settle, that in 1820, two years after conquest, though disorder and plunder had ceased, poverty reigned everywhere without a sign of relief.

In 1844-45 an insurrection broke out in Kolhapur and Savantvadi, and it was feared that Dharwar and Belgaum, on account of their proximity, would be affected by the uneasiness and disturbance. A force raised in March, 1845, restored quiet without any serious disturbance.⁹ Between 1845 and 1856 public peace remained unbroken. The only thing of importance was the death of Parshuram Bhaos Putwurdhan of Tasgaum in 1848. Tasgaum was annexed to the Belgaum District.

On the outbreak of the mutiny in 1857, Dharwar was in danger from the north and the east. In the north, one Baba Sahib of Nargund, and in the east, Bhimrao Nadgir had made a common plan to rebel. We need not go at length into the history of this rebellion. Suffice it to say that the main action fought by Major Hughes in June, 1858, resulted in the death of Bhimrao in action. The chief of Nargund who had in the meantime killed Mr. Mason, the Political Agent, was finally captured and hanged on 12th June, 1858. Belgaum had also been in considerable danger, but under the guidance of Mr. Seton Karr and

⁹ Stoke's Belgaum : p. 89.

General Lester, the fort was put in a state of defence, and the difficult times were tided over. Among the soldiers and garrison there were inklings of an insurrection under the leadership of a Mussulman Munshi. On the 10th August, 1857, a Bombay detachment reached Belgaum, via Goa. With this added force, General Lester was free to arrest the Munshi who was convicted along with some soldiers and executed. In Bijapur there were no local disturbances or any signs of disaffection. As precautionary measures, the people were disarmed, and a squadron of the Southern Maratha Horse was stationed in the district and remained there till 1859. The local mutinies surrounding the place took place under the leadership of one Venkappa Baheri, the Raja of Sholapur and Bava Saheb, the Brahmin of Nargund in Dharwar. All these risings were immediately quelled, and for the last two Colonel Malcolm was mainly responsible. These timely actions saved future trouble, and from 1858 the peace of the Karnatak was never disturbed.

In 1864, Kaladgi, now Bijapur, was formed into a separate Collectorate, and took from Belgaum the talukas of Badami, Bagalkote and Hungund. The history of Bijapur as a separate district commences nearly at the time (1864) when our narrative is about to close (1868). The fortunes of this division are, therefore, narrated as partly those of Belgaum and partly of Sholapur.

CHAPTER I

GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

THE three Kanarese districts of the Bombay Presidency, namely, Dharwar, Belgaum and Bijapur (Kadagi) Collectorates, were, together with Kolhapur, Miraj and other Native States, always, to the present day called the "Southern Maratha Country."¹

Dharwar can be divided into two very unlike and unequal parts, the irregular belt of hilly and woody country to the west, and to the east a bare plain stretching about sixty miles to the north-east. In the narrow western belt, the soil is red and gravelly, the landscape hilly and woody. In the north and centre of the district, the plain is a broad stretch of black soil, flat and bare, the rainfall 20 to 30 inches, the water-supply scanty and in places brackish.

The western belt is part of the rough, wooded country along the Syhadri Water-shed. To the west stands the town of Dharwar, about 2,420 feet above the sea. All along the western side, the scenery is wild with woody hills, rugged or smooth, flat-topped or pointed, giving cover to wild pig, deer, panthers and tigers. About 1834, these western hills were occasionally visited by wild elephants.

North-east from Dharwar and Hubli, across the whole breadth of the district, a bare, black plain with a few scattered sandstone peaks slopes toward the Bennihalla and other tributaries of the Malprabha. This black-soil plain presents to the eye a varied landscape at different times of the year. During the monsoon and cold seasons, the plain is a broad stretch of rich crops of gram, pulse, oil plants and cotton. In the heat of summer, the plain gapes in deep fissures, and its bare monotony is relieved by a few trees or shrubs and by almost no traces of tillage. "Clouds of dust sweep before the parching winds, or move

¹"A more complete misnomer, however it originated, could not well have been devised. It is true that, in one of the earliest inscriptions of Pulakesi II this part of the country is included in what was known then, and even many centuries before his time, as Maharastra, or 'the Great Country.' But the word had originally, and in his time a signification very different from the special meaning which its corruption, 'Maratha,' carries now, and denoted simply the great and comparatively unknown region lying to the south of the early Aryan settlement in Hindustan. In the whole area of the country treated in this paper, not a single Maratha inscription has been discovered of a greater age than two or three centuries. With the exception that a few Prakrit words occur here and there, the inscriptions are all either in pure Sanskrit or pure Kanarese, or in the two languages combined. The fact speaks for itself as to what was the vernacular of the country in early times."—"The Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency," I F Fleet, p. 3

across the plain in huge pillars a hundred feet high. The cheerless view ends in an even, wall-like line of sandstone hills."

There are five chief ranges of hills, the Buddangudd in the west, the Airani in the south-east, the Kappatgudd in the east and two nameless ranges in the south.²

The rivers of the south-west and south-east drain into the Tungbhadrā, and those of the northern half of the district into the Malprabha.³ Two streams, the Tung and the Bhadrā, rise in the south-west, and after traversing 50 to 60 miles join to form the Tungbhadrā. The united streams after a course of 35 miles touch Dharwar, and passing through the Nizam's dominions fall into the Krishna after a total run of 100 miles. In the hot season, the Tungbhadrā runs low enough to be forded, but during the monsoon it expands to a breadth of half a mile. At other seasons it is not navigable. The bed is at places of sand and black earth, and generally rocky with steep banks. The feeders of less importance are the Varda, Dharmā, Kumadvati and Hirehalla.

The Malprabha, forming the north-east limit of the district, receives the drainage of all the other streams. It rises to the south-west of the town of Belgaum, and after flowing east a distance of 60 miles through that Collectorate, passes for about 25 miles through the Southern Maratha Country. The Malprabha becomes a familiar name when we pursue the Survey Report⁴ of Ron, Navalgund, Badami and Hungund talukas. Though during the rains it is a large stream, in summer it has a slight flow. Other streams of lesser importance are the Beenihalli and the Gangavali.

The climate of the district is known as healthy and agreeable. It is the pleasantest in a tract near the Syhadri crest, between the western forests and the treeless east. Within these limits lie Dharwar, Hubli, Kod and Bankapur. "By the middle of April," says the *Gazetteer*, "the height of the hot season, which is never severe, is over, the easterly winds blow with less force, and at times give way to a westerly breeze which lowers the temperature in the daytime and cools and freshens

²"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 3

³"About three-quarters of a mile from Hoobly, the Malpurba is crossed. It was swollen by the monsoon (July) and unfordable, having about eighteen feet of water in the main channel. Rate of the surface current, two and a half feet per second. Its breadth by trigonometrical observation, ninety-five yards. ... The temperature of the water a foot below the surface was seventy-four degrees."—"Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 358

⁴Report No. 235 of Dec. 21, 1848, Report No. 445 of Oct. 25, 1844, Report No. 165 of June 9, 1852, Report No. 267 of July 26, 1853

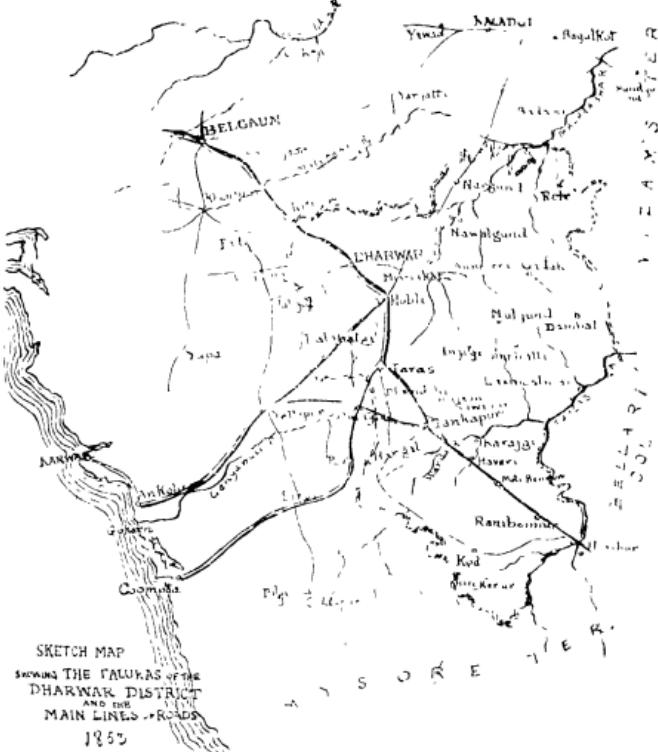
the nights." In summer, the most fearful phenomenon is the dust columns which chase one another over the bare plains from east to west "making a vortex of heated air whose whirl raises dust, sand, straw, baskets, cloths, or other light articles, sometimes 200 to 300 feet high." By the mid-summer (May), the weather begins to cool, and with the advent of short, sharp thunderstorms, the parched plains welcome the cool showers of a much awaited monsoon.

In 1857, within three miles of Dharwar, many parts of the country were thickly covered with dense forests—the haunts of tiger and several other wild game. Within twenty years there was hardly enough cover for jackals, and a number of parts were under tillage. These forest reserves, at our period of history (1813-1868), were not marked out, but the work was undertaken in 1871. In Dharwar, Kalghatgi and Bankapur, the forest lands were hilly and waving, but in Hangal they were mostly flat. The finest trees prevailed throughout the whole of Dharwar, Kalghati and Bankapur; toward Hangal they almost disappeared. Till 1871 the Dharwar and Belgaum forests were under the charge of one European forest officer. The rights of grazing in forest lands were sold to contractors.

We may now turn to study the situation and physical features of the individual talukas of Dharwar Collectorate in 1843. The Dharwar District in 1843 consisted of the talukas of Dambul, Bankapur, Nargund, Kode, Dharwar, Hubli, Navalgund, Misrikota, Ranibednore, Mulgund Mahal, Hangal and Tadas.

Turning to the taluka of Dharwar, which occupies the north-western corner of the Collectorate, its appearance and climate varied considerably. The Belgaum and Hubli Road divided the taluka into two parts, one of which was composed for the most part of a level plain of black soil, while the other consisted of hilly country. The climate, on leaving the plain for the hilly portion of the taluka, became too moist.⁵ To the far south lay the taluka of Kod which formed the southern border of the Dharwar Collectorate from the Varda to the Tungbhadrā River. Its general shape was that of an irregular, four-sided, oblong figure, with an average length of 30 miles, and an average breadth of about 16 miles. The climate, like that of Dharwar, varied considerably. Long droughts during the monsoon were very rare, though partial failure of the harvest occurred rather frequently. The surface of the taluka was generally level, and consisted of fine, swelling plains stretching from the

⁵ Report No. 235 of Dec. 21, 1



Varda to the Tungbhadra. Its plains were well watered, being traversed by numerous *nalahs*.⁶

Between Dharwar to the north and Kod in the extreme south lay the talukas of Hubli, Tadas, Bankapur, Hangal and Ranibednore. The Hubli villages lay along the border of a hilly tract of country stretching westward to the ghauts, but which sank down somewhat abruptly into a level plain of great extension, over which the eye might range eastward and northward for many miles, before encountering a single elevation to interrupt the uniformity of the prospect. The hilly portion of the taluka was composed of low, flat-topped ranges of claystone, which in consequence of the readily disposable character of this rock, were rarely found rugged or precipitous. These hills were for the most part covered with a tolerable herbage, and a good deal of low brushwood was also scattered over them. The character of the scenery, though somewhat tame, was verdant and pleasing. The drainage of the Hubli taluka was toward the Western Ghauts, and their waters flowing to the Indian Ocean were precipitated over the celebrated falls of Gersopa.⁷ Ranibednore was situated in the south-east, it was bounded on the east by the Tungbhadra beyond which was the Bellary *zilla* of the Madras Presidency, on the west and south by the taluka of Kod and on the north lay Jagir Territories.⁸ From the great scarcity of trees and the rocky and sterile character of a considerable portion of its surface, the taluka presented nearly throughout a bare and uninteresting appearance. It was traversed in several directions by ridges of barren hills of a great height. With the exception of some land near the river and an open level tract, situated between the hills and the town of Ranibednore, the country to the east consisted of hilly or undulating ground of which a small portion only was fit for tillage. This black surface extended to the west, but a short distance beyond and stretching toward the Kod taluka was a considerable tract of good soil.⁹ The climate of Ranibednore was nearly uniform. Hangal lay to the north of Ranibednore, bounded on the south and west by Mysore and Kanara, to the north by Tadas, and by Bankapur to the east. The taluka was well watered, being traversed throughout its greatest length by the rivers Varda and Dharma. Hangal was further distinguished by diversity of natural features and climate. The Mamludar's division was uneven in surface, though the rising ground rarely attained the level of hills,

⁶ Report No 235 of Dec 21, 1848

⁷ Report No. 445 of Oct. 25, 1844

⁸ Report No 15 of Jan. 26, 1848.

⁹ Letter No 3 of Aug 29, 1846

with a light soil and moist climate. The Mahalkari's division, on the contrary, consisted for the most part of a level plain of black soil on both banks of the Varda and Dharma.¹⁰ The Tadas Mahal belonged to the Hubli taluka, and was in most particulars similar to Hangal, including the climate.¹¹ Bankapur was most centrally situated, being enclosed by Ranibednore, Kod, Hangal and Hubli on the east, south and west, and by the Jagir territories intervening between it and the Navalgund and Dambal talukas on the north. The surface was generally flat, though skirted by low hills and rising ground on nearly all sides. The low lands were generally of good quality, but there was also a good deal of inferior soil near the hills. The scenery was tame, but from the great abundance of trees more pleasing than the bare plains of Navalgund and Dambal. The climate was also superior to that of those districts.¹² The villages in the Kurijee division on the banks of the Varda River were often in peril of being washed away when the river overflowed its banks in the monsoon¹³

Dambal was the most easterly and also the largest taluka of the Collectorate. It was of very irregular shape, tapering away almost to a point in the south, and had a long, narrow projecting spur to the north. The southern extremity rested on the Tungbhadrā River from which a range of rugged hills took a north-westerly direction for 30 miles, and divided it from the Putwurdhun Jagirs to the west. The Nizam's Territories bordered on the east. With the exception of the hilly tract to the south-west, the district consisted of a continuous plain of black soil similar to that of Navalgund. The climate of the level plain of Dambal, forming three-fourths of the entire district, was similar to that of Navalgund, and the fall of rain equally precarious. The remaining portion of the taluka lay immediately around the range of hills, and differed from the plain both in soil and climate. Navalgund was a continuous plain of black, alluvial soil, which was usually of considerable depth. It lay to the north of Dambal with its general slope toward the north-east, and in this direction it was traversed by a small river, Benni, which joined the Malparbha at the northern extremity of the district. The water of the Benni was, unfortunately, so brackish as to be hardly fit for domestic use, and there was generally a great scarcity of good water throughout the district. In climate, Navalgund resembled the

¹⁰ Sel Rec Bom Gov. No CLVI

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Report No 146 of Sept 29, 1846

¹³ Letter of June 18, 1846.



plain villages of Hubli, and its southerly neighbour, Dambal.¹⁴ Nurgund was situated between Dharwar and Belgaum Collectores. From the extreme western to the extreme eastern villages, it was about 25 miles, and from the extreme northern to the extreme southern, it ran about 16 miles. The river Malprabha ran through the northern part of the taluka. The greater part of Nurgund consisted of fine, black soil. There was a considerable difference in the fall of rain in the different parts. The west had a decided advantage in that respect, the monsoon there being on the whole sufficient and tolerably certain, while the east was less favoured in that respect.¹⁵ The Misrikota division of Hubli lay immediately south of Dharwar taluka. The surface was generally undulating, and to a considerable extent in the south and the west, overgrown with jungle. The climate resembled western Dharwar.¹⁶ Mulgund Mahal lay between Navalgund and Dambal, sharing in due proportion the physical features of those two districts.

Belgaum runs parallel to the Syhadri Hills with a very irregular outline. Kolhapur on the north-west and North Kanara on the southwest separate it in a great degree from the Syhadri Hills. But between these two districts, a strip of about twenty miles breadth passes west to the crest of the Syhadri. This western fringe of the Collectorate has forest or bush covered hills, and a comparatively damp and cool climate. The rainfall in this tract is heavier and the vegetation abundant. The rest of the district sloping to the east is broken by scattered and rolling hills. Most of this plain is rich, black soil, but further eastward it changes to a stony, red earth. In spite of numerous well-grown trees in the valleys, the country as a whole is deplorably bare. The west and south are fairly wooded with mangoes and tamarind.

The district may be divided, for descriptive purposes, into four parts: the western tract that runs west of the Syhadri, and the three belts of the eastern plain that run east and west, drained by the Malprabha in the south, by the Gatprabha in the centre, and by the Krishna in the north. The abundance of brushwood, the rugged hills and running streams make the western fringe and its hilly parts an interesting and beautiful landscape. There is plentiful rainfall, and from the abundance of its ever-green brushwood the country at all times looks fresh and cool.

¹⁴ Report No. 445 of Oct. 25, 1844

¹⁵ Letter No. 147 of March 29, 1860

¹⁶ Report No. 235 of Dec. 21, 1848.

Of the three belts into which the Malprabha¹⁷ divides the centre and east of the district, the valley through which the river passes to the west is covered with hills and forests. The banks of the river are bordered with trees and bushes. The prettiest spots of scenery in the country are where the river cuts through low ranges of hill. "The deep gorge known as Navil Tirth, or the Peacock's Pool, has much beauty."

Near Gokak, about the centre of the district, on both banks of the Gatprabha, the plain is interspersed by ranges of low, barren, sand-stone hills through one of which the river forces its way in the famous Gokak Falls. Captain Newbold, who visited this celebrated spot sometime about 1845, described his journey to the picturesque gorge through which the Gatprabha¹⁸ hurried from its mountain sources into the elevated plains of the Deccan.¹⁹

"The road lay along the bottom and side of this defile on the right bank of the river, which was now (July) swollen by the monsoon, fresh from the Western Ghauts. It varied in breadth from 90 to 300 yards, presenting a rapid, muddy stream, brawling and rushing from the alternate confinement and opening out of its rocky channel. It is unfordable generally during four months in the year at Gokak . . .

"After an hour's time spent in winding up this rugged defile, the falls, the roar of which we distinctly heard during the silence of the night at the town of Gokak, at a sudden angle of the road became partly visible, presenting the magnificent spectacle of a mass of water containing upwards of 16,000 cubic feet, precipitated from the tabular surface of the sandstone into a gorge forming the head of the defile, the bottom of which is about 178 feet below the lip of the cataract. The

¹⁷ The following is the story of the origin of the Malprabha

"In the village of Kankumbi, on the eastern brow of the Sahydaris, lived a man who was happy in being the husband of a beautiful and virtuous woman. In spite of his wife's goodness, jealousy seized his soul, and he gave his wife neither rest nor peace. At length, driven to despair, she sacrificed to the gods and putting up a prayer to Basava, the patron of Langayats, threw herself into a mountain tarn. No sooner did the pool receive the sacrifice than its waters began to rise, and, flowing over their banks, formed a river which was called Malprabha, the cleaner from sins."—"Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 12

¹⁸ "The Kistnah, near the confluence, is apparently about five hundred yards broad, and the Gatpurba about one hundred. The current of the former had a velocity of about two and a half feet per second, and the latter about two and three quarters feet.

"The temperature of both rivers, one foot below the surface, was exactly the same, viz., 76° 5'. Temperature of air in shade 76°, in sun 84°. Mean temperature of the South Mahratta Country at Dharwar, according to Christie, is about 75°."—"Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 353

¹⁹ "Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 353

Gutparba, a little below the fall, is apparently about 250 yards across, but contracts to 80 as the brink of the chasm is approached, consequently the density and velocity of the watery mass is much increased, and it hurries down the shelving tables of rock with frightful rapidity to its fall....

"This ponderous descent and the heavy and muddy colour of the water convey a feeling of weight through the eye to the senses, which is relieved by the lightness and airiness of thin clouds of white vapour and amber-coloured spray, which ascend from the basin at the bottom of the gorge in curling wreaths, curtaining the lower portion of the fall, and through which the basin was only seen at intervals when its surface was swept by the fitful gusts that swept up the glen.

"Rising above the cliffs that confine the falls, the water particles vanish as they descend; but again condensing, descend in gentle showers, which are felt at a short distance round the head of the falls."

Coming back to the Malprabha in the south of the Collectorate, the distance from its banks to the neighbouring district of Dharwar was twenty-three miles. The country that lies in between is hilly and picturesque, particularly around the forts and the town of Kittur and Taigur, which command a lovely landscape of hill and dale. The valleys were generally well-watered, cultivated with dry and wet grain and studded, park-like, with clumps of mango and tamarind, while the sloping sides of the hills, verdant with the rain, afforded a plentiful pasture to flocks of sheep and herds of cattle.²⁰

The Collectorate of Belgaum consisted of the talukas of Padshapur, Bedi, Sumpgaon, Pur-ghur, Gokak, Chikodi, Athni, Tasgaon and Jagir lands. Besides these, the three talukas of Badami, Hungund, and Bagulkote, were also included in the Belgaum district till 1864, when together with Indi, Muddbihal, Hippargi and Mangoli they, as we noted in the Sholapur Collectorate, formed the separate Collectorate of Bijapur. Hence Bijapur as a Collectorate only comes into existence nearly at the end of our period (1818-1868).

²⁰"The landscape around Dharwar partakes of the same character, and was frequently brought to recollection during the subsequent wanderings in Karamania, the Troad, and other parts of Asia Minor..."

"The physical aspect of the country to the west and south-west of Dharwar is hilly. The elevations are generally like those of the clay slate of the Cambrian group, round-backed, smooth, of no great altitude, and separated by well-cultivated valleys, or narrow ravines. . . ."—"Notes Principally Geographical on the South Mahratta Country," Captain Newbold, p 354

To the south-west of the district lay the taluka of Padshapur. The general surface was hilly and very undulating, and toward the west it became mountainous; the hills were, comparatively speaking, bare, neither were there any large jungles to be met with in any part of the Mahal. The banks of the Tamburpuni River were precipitous, and during the monsoon it overflowed its banks and did much harm. Besides the surface of the soil near the river was so much cut up by *nalahs* that the rain washed away all the soil deposits into the river.²¹ The climate, especially in the villages around the town of Belgaum, was exceedingly wet. The very abundance of rain and humid climate brought up luxuriant crops²² The Ankulgi division of Padshapur had its villages either in the valley of the Markundi River, or on the sandstone hills which shut in the valley of that river on either side. The valley of the river was rich in soil, and the monsoon was also plentiful.²³ The Bedi taluka was to the eastwards generally open; in the centre and south-eastern corner small patches of jungle and wooded hills were met with. Along the southern boundary and to the westward in the neighbourhood of the ghauts, the country was densely wooded and exceedingly hilly. The taluka was intersected from west to east by the river Malprabha. The climate was generally very moist; on the eastern and south-eastern border only was the fall of rain not too heavy to allow of the growth of good grain.²⁴ Sumpgaon presented a great diversity of soil and surface. The western side was generally more or less hilly, but the country sloped away to the eastwards, and gradually merged into the great black, or cotton soil plain.²⁵ In the southern half of the taluka, with the exception of a few villages where it was black, the soil in that part was red or brown.²⁶ This territory also possessed some villages which had a fine black soil, well watered, and supplied with moisture and silt.²⁷

The Pursghur taluka was of irregular shape. It was divided into two nearly equal parts by a rugged range of sandstone hills of no great height, having a general direction from north-west to south-east.

²¹ Report of March 26, 1855

²² Report No. 318 of 1855

²³ Report No. 180 of May 12, 1857

²⁴ Report No. 59 of March, 1855

²⁵ Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No. XCIV

²⁶ The rest of the district north and east of this is mostly black soil, producing the usual crops, and is the western extremity of the great black plain stretching from Dharwar eastwards.—Report of March 29, 1853

²⁷ Report of March 30, 1853

and which was prolonged through Gokak taluka on one side and that of Badami on the other. Pursghur was also intersected into two unequal portions by the Malprabha which entered it from Sumpgaon on the west. This course of the river was very remarkable in as much as it lay across the most rugged portion of the sandstone hills. The river entered the hills about five miles south-west of the town of "Manovolee," and for the next three miles rushed foaming down a narrow, winding channel obstructed by large fragments of rock, and shut in on either side by precipices, forming together the wildest and most singular scene to be met with in the Southern Maratha Country.

The climate of Pursghur was nowhere moist, but well suited to dry crops. The fall of rain varied considerably in different parts. The supply of water for domestic purposes was very deficient, and had in the case of some villages to be brought from a distance of several miles during the hot season. Above the hills the villages in their immediate neighbourhood had the best supply of rain, while those farther removed were less favoured.²⁸

We may now turn to the three Kanarese talukas of Badami, Bagulkote and Hungund. This tract of the country was said to be an excellent example of the influence of geological conditions on scenery.²⁹ The landscape of Indi, then in Sholapur, was unlike the landscape of Badami, as the Indi trap was unlike the Badami sandstone. In the sandy soils of Badami, the mango grew admirably, and flourishing plantations of it were to be found in several villages;³⁰ there was also much bushy vegetation. The climate was moist and unhealthy, and near the lakes, damp and vapour-laden.³¹ The rainfall was extremely irregular and varying in amount. Bagulkote was immediately north of Badami and was of a compact form approaching in shape a parallelogram. The Krishna³² formed its northern boundary and divided it from Sattara and Sholapur districts. The Gatprabha River entered the taluka a few

²⁸ Report No. 246 of 1849

²⁹ "Bijapur Gazetteer," p. 2.

³⁰ Report No. 165 of June 9, 1852.

³¹ "And it is here that the people working knee-deep in mud fall yearly victims to a fever which breaks their constitution and makes men of forty look like sixty, and seldom live to be old."—"Bijapur Gazetteer," p. 12.

³² "It may be remarked that the Krishna is one of the most considerable rivers of India. It rises among the Mahavaleshwar Hills, near the western coast.... During a course of about 700 miles it receives the waters of the Yarli, the Warda, the Gutparba, the Malpurba, the Bimia and the Tumbuddra. Its breadth from bank to bank at Danoor... was found to be 1,918 feet"—"Geological Papers," Carter, pp. 313, 314.

miles west of Kaladgi, and after running nearly due east for about twenty miles, turned suddenly to the north immediately below the town of Bagulkote. A great portion of the land of this taluka was poor³³ In the valley of the Gatprabha, the Bagulkote and Kaladji plains contained a large proportion of black soil of a quality well suited to the climate, as it required but little rain. With the exception of the plains of the Krishna and Gatprabha, there was little good land; the soil of the whole central part, sloping from the chain of hills separating the valleys of the rivers, and also that of the villages along the Badami border, was poor and stony.³⁴ The Hungund taluka was situated to the extreme east of the district. It was bounded on the west and north-west by Badami and Bagulkote, on the north-east it was separated from Sholapur Collectorate by the river Krishna, and on the east and south of it stood the Nizam's dominions. The sandstone hills of the neighbouring talukas extended a short distance into Hungund on the west. The soil was poor and sandy and the use of manure was necessary. The vicinity of the hills gave this taluka a decent amount of rain. On leaving the hills, the remainder of the taluka consisted of an unbroken plain. The soil was generally black and of good quality, particularly near the Krishna and Malprabha. The climate on the whole was much better than that of the talukas immediately to the west. The monsoon was also certain, and failure of rain was a rare occurrence.³⁵

Gokak lay to the west of Pursghur. The range of sandstone hills enclosed it on the south and west, while to the north-east it was open and tolerably level. Near the northern extremity, the Gatprabha entered the taluka from the west, and passing through the hills was precipitated down a sandstone precipice at the celebrated falls of Gokak. The soil resembled very closely that of Pursghur and the climate though similar was less favoured. The rainfall was scanty and precarious, and it became more and more so as one left the hills and advanced eastwards to the open country³⁶ The southern part of the Chickodi taluka was intersected by the Gatprabha and its tributary, the Hurunkasi; the former constituted the southern boundary of the district. Through the north of the taluka ran the "Doodh Gunga" and its tributary, "Ved Gunga"; the first formed its junction with the Krishna just within the north-eastern boundary. In the neighbourhood of the

³³ Report No. 165 of June 9, 1852.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Report No. 267 of July 26, 1853.

³⁶ Report No. 246 of Dec. 24, 1849.

Hurunkasi, much black soil of a superior quality was found. The table-land between the Ghatprabha and the Krishna was generally of poor, shallow, trap soil called "mal." The western part of the taluka, in the vicinity of the Krishna, contained much deep, black soil, as was almost everywhere the case in the valley of that river. The climate in different parts was diverse, the rainfall decreased rapidly with the increase of distance from the ghauts. On the east, the monsoon was uncertain and scanty; in the central and western part, as a rule certain and sufficient; while in the south-western corner among the hills, the fall was much too great.³⁷

The surface rock of the Athni taluka was trap, and the general aspect of the country presented the characteristic appearance of districts where this rock prevailed. In many places, for hundreds of yards together, the bare rock could be seen exposed without the slightest covering of soil. Interspersed with the country of the nature described, could be found tracts, more or less extensive, of black soil. Much of the taluka, with the exception of that about the sites of some of the villages, was devoid of trees of any description. The eastern and western villages were divided by a tract of country two or three miles wide. The villages to the east had the worst sort of climate, while the climate of the west, though somewhat better, was still very uncertain. The villages along the Krishna were, in general, better off than their neighbours. The waters of the Krishna, overflowing yearly, rendered the soil of these villages independent of the local rainfall.³⁸ The villages of Athni and Tasgaon³⁹ were very intermixed. A range of hills running nearly north and south some eight miles east of the town of Tasgaon, divided the taluka into two parts. The country to the east of the hills was, on the whole, of a sterile character. Particles of superior soil they were, but they bore small proportion to the quality of an inferior description. To the west of the hills, the country improved as it approached the Krishna. The level plain through which the river everywhere flowed was composed of deep alluvial soil of great fertility, continually renovated by the silt deposited by the annual floods. There was a most marked difference in the climate of the eastern and western extremities of the district. In the former, the fall of rain was both scanty and un-

³⁷ Report No. 180 of May 12, 1857; and Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No. CXVIII

³⁸ Report No. 267 of July 27, 1853.

³⁹ Tasgaum was later transferred to the Satara Collectorate. I have given a detailed description of this taluka in the "Economic History of the Bombay Deccan & Karnatak," Part I.

certain. In the level tract beyond, the rain was, as a rule, both sufficient and certain enough for agricultural purposes.⁴⁰

The two important Jagir lands which lapsed to Government in 1849 and 1857 were Yadwar Mahal in Gokak taluka and Kargwar Estate to the south of Tasgaon. The physical characteristics of Yadwar Mahal were very similar to those of Athni. Black soil prevailed to a considerable extent, but much of it was poor, stony and of deficient depth. The climate was very precarious, but the usual dry crops could be raised.⁴¹ The villages of the Kargwar Estate were so widely spread over a large surface of the country that it was impossible to group them in order that a distinctive character could be pointed out.⁴² The general character of the surface was that of an undulating plain, nowhere broken by any range of remarkable hills. The general character of the soils on the rivers was poor with the exception of two villages (Korrlgood and Boodnee). During the monsoon, large herds of antelopes were constantly found wandering over the grazing lands.

Dr. Alexander Christie, in his article in the *Madras Journal*⁴³ of 1836, stated that the Dharwar District and the adjoining coast, contained specimens of all rocks, and served as an example of the general geognostical structure of the entire peninsula of India.⁴⁴ The geognostical arrangement of rocks of the Indian Peninsula was everywhere, according to him, very simple; and a great uniformity prevailed throughout the country from Cape Comerin as far as the Ganges.

All the eastern part of the Southern Maratha from the *sungum* of the Krishna and Tungbhadra to near the British frontier, consisted of granite. It also occurred in the southern parts of the district. Granite was not generally employed for building purposes on account of its great expense. It was often hewn into hand-mills for grinding corn. Most of the temples at Anagundi were built of grey granite, which retained its natural colour perfectly. Some on the other hand were built of greenstone, and were consequently black.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Report No. 267 of July 27, 1853.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Report of July 4, 1859.

⁴³ Reprinted from *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, Vol. IV, 1836, found in Carter's "Geological Papers," p. 328.

⁴⁴ "Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 328.

⁴⁵ "The ancient Hindoo temples of Anagoondy, now partly in ruins, are built of grey granite... The massive and gloomy style of architecture, which characterizes all Hindoo buildings, is also met with here; but in one instance it has, to a certain degree, been departed from, for in one of the principal buildings there is an extensive colonnade, the columns of which are light with

The transition rocks occupied a very large part of the Dharwar and Kanara districts. They extended from the eastern and southern parts of the Dharwar Collectorate, where they succeeded the granite, to the western foot of the ghauts, being only in a few spots interrupted by the granite, which protruded from beneath them.

There were, besides, three varieties of slates: the clay, the chlorite and the tal. The first was found in great quantities and varieties all over the district. Its principal colours were grey, blue green, red and white. The grey variety was the most common and was met with in Kaladgi, Hoolgoor near Malprabha, and in Soonda. The white slate, which was like pure porce-earth, was found in great abundance at Dharwar. Owing to the soft nature of these clay slates, wells could be easily dug to a depth of nearly seventy feet at Dharwar. The chlorite was met with throughout the whole of the central and southern parts of Dharwar, in the ghauts and even at several points on the western coast. Its common colour was light greenish-grey. The tal, like the chlorite, had a very wide distribution throughout the district. There were, like the others, several varieties of it. In some places the clay stone contained numerous small nodules of clay iron-stone, which seldom exceeded the size of a walnut. They were picked up by the people, and smelted by means of charcoal in a very small, rude furnace blown by hand-bellows.

Limestone was common in the north-eastern parts of Dharwar. Numerous large beds of it occurred about Kaladji and Bagulkote, where it was associated with clay slates. Besides these rocks, the district abounded in the grey-wacke found in Kaladji and in other parts of the Collectorate; gneiss was found at Dambal and Nurgund; quartz rock extended from Dharwar to beyond Kittur; old red sandstone and secondary trap-rocks were found in nearly all parts, and lastly the ferruginous claystone was found in the district and principally in the western parts and on the summits of the ghauts. Dr. Christie, according to Captain Newbold, adopting the Wernerian system, had classed the rocks of the South Maratha Country under five heads, namely, the granite, the transition rocks, old red sandstone, secondary trap and alluvial.⁴⁶

small pedestals and capitals, and approaching somewhat in their proportion to the Grecian. Some of the pillars are tastefully carved with flowers.... They support immense slabs of granite which are carved on their under surface so as to form an ornamental roof. The largest of these slabs which are in the central part of the building are at least thirty feet long..."—Dr. Christie.

⁴⁶ "Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 368.

In 1845, Captain Newbold in his paper⁴⁷ to the Asiatic Society of Bengal drew attention to the slate quarries of Katurki and the iron mines of Hirasillaky. The village of Katurki, on the Maningpur road, was about one-half *koss* from Kaladji. Besides Katurki, there was also Sullakairy where roofing slates, slates and slate-pencils were quarried. Sullakairy was about three miles from Kaladji. From the more massive beds of these quarries were hewn blocks for pillars of temples, Hindu idols, etc. Roofing slates were not patronised by the people, but considerable quantities were being already sent to Belgaum and Goa.⁴⁸ Iron ore was procured, according to native information, near the village of Hirasillaky, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ *koss* from Kaladji. The metal sold at 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ rupees the *pucka* maund of 48 seers. Land carriages by bandies or bullocks, and cheap fuel for smelting were readily procurable.

A visit to the Belgaum District by Lieutenant Aytoun in 1852, led him to describe the geological features of the area included between the rivers Krishna and Malprabha on the north, south and east, and a line drawn through Gulguleh, Kaladji, and Badami on the west.⁴⁹ From the granite basin of the Krishna at Belgi on the north side, to the basin of the Malprabha at Jaleehal on the south, where the granite reappeared, the whole of the district belonged to what could be termed the "Argilaceous⁵⁰ Limestone Formation."

The infusion of iron into portions of all the stratified masses which appeared to have characterised one epoch of igneous activity, had given rise to an abundance of iron ore in most parts of the district; associated with iron (and most probably fused at the same period) there were ores of manganese. The beds of all the *nalahs* abounded in titaniferous iron-sand, and the black soil also contained it in large proportion. There were traces of copper in the limestone near Kaladji.

The limestone at Bagulkote had veins of manganese, but that metal was more frequently met with amongst the sandstone. Specular iron

⁴⁷ Reprinted from the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. XIV, April, 1845, Carter's "Geological Papers."

⁴⁸ "The prices at the quarries, I was informed on the spot, for slates of a foot square, and a quarter or half an inch thick, are five rupees per hundred slates, they may be procured, however, of much larger dimensions, and of any degree of thickness. A capital writing slate and pencil were cut for me out of the quarries, shaped and polished all in a couple of hours."—Newbold

⁴⁹ Geological Report on the Bagulkote, and Part of Adjoining Talooks of the Belgaum Collectorate, Lieut. Aytoun, March, 1853.

⁵⁰ Consisting of clay

was found in the same situation, but haematite⁵¹ in quartz and argillaceous⁵² iron ores were the more frequent varieties.

Iron had, at one time, been smelted very generally throughout the taluka and the dross of the metal from the old furnaces could be observed in different localities. The scarcity of firewood in the northern parts of the district, and the introduction of English iron, led to the extinction of that manufacture. A few furnaces still existed in the southern part of the district where there was more jungle on the hills. The ore selected for smelting was a very poor iron clay, and the iron produced from it was of an inferior quality.⁵³ The black soil of the district was frequently found to possess fragments of iron and large quantities of titaniferous iron-sand.

The elevated tract which lay between Bagulkote and Kaladji abounded in iron and manganese ores, never seen in veins, but covering large spaces from broken-up veins. The valley on the Gagulkote side was covered with soil through which debris of iron schists, iron and manganese ores, was profusely scattered. In the valley of Kaladji near the eastern hills, there were quartz and iron ridges. The quartz was cavernous, and the cavities were filled with iron. Scattered over the undulations, here and there, were vast quantities of iron and manganese.

The plains near the village of Kucheedorer, about four miles from Kaladji, were often coloured green with copper, which also permeated the limestone in thread-like forms. Almost every fragment of the limestone had a greater or lesser proportion of the copper colourations. The general diffusion of the copper colouring, wrote Aytoun, was likely to lead one to hope that copper might be found in a concentrated form in veins. In the Ural Mountains, it was near the junction of the limestone with igneous rocks that copper was abundant, and the analogies between those ranges of mountains and the ghauts, appeared to Lieutenant Aytoun to be so numerous that they induced one to believe that their metaliferous character would also be found alike.

On crossing the Malprabha, elevated tracts of rocks on the east of the basin were entered. Here a striking feature presented itself. Parallel ridges, composed of alternate bands of quartz and iron ore, having a direction nearly north and south, were met with at intervals of a quarter, or half a mile. These ridges were at their highest not more

51 An iron ore, red ferric oxide.

52 Consisting of clay.

53 "Geological Papers on Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 381.

than 150 feet above the lowest part of the valley, but they had so far attracted the attention of every geologist who had visited the district.⁵⁴

"I traced them throughout the line of country which lies between the Mulpurba and the Kupputgood Hills," wrote Aytoun in 1852, "and I learn from the writings of Captain Newbold that they are met with at Bellary and in Sondur. They appear to be strictly analogous to the quartz ranges and metamorphic parallel bands of the Ural Mountains and those of Australia, and like the latter, I conclude they will be found to characterise the 'gold zone' of this district."

In 1839, the Collector of Dharwar forwarded to Government a few pieces of gold and some gold dust from the Kupputgudd Hills,⁵⁵ and with the sanction of Government sent one of his assistants to make further inquiries.⁵⁶ In 1852, Lieutenant Aytoun was deputed to make a geological survey, and report on the mineral resources of the Bombay Karnatak to which we have already referred. Lieutenant Aytoun seems not to have traced the gold to its source, though he correctly inferred that the source was among the chlorite slate hills to the west.⁵⁷ In 1854, Rev. Clarke, an Australian, applied for information on gold, and was furnished with the details of the previous endeavours.⁵⁸ In 1856, Mr. Elliot, Assistant Collector of Belgaum, was especially employed in examining the gold-yielding streams of Kupputgudd. Two years later he sent a bottle containing a quantity of titaniferous sand. The Gov-

⁵⁴ Carter's "Geological Papers, 1857," p. 399.

⁵⁵ "At Dummul, the main range of the Kupputgood is about 1,000 feet high. It presents a bold, almost linear outline, in which respect it differs most strikingly from the mammiform and conical outlying and subordinate ranges."—Aytoun's Report, Dec. 1852.

⁵⁶ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 18.

⁵⁷ "It is among the chlorite-slate hills on the west about two miles beyond the village of Dhonee that the gold is found.

"The development of iron pyrites is exceedingly great in the gold region; and were it not that all the conditions on which the large development of the precious metal depends are here found in conjunction with the pyrites, it might be imagined that the small quantity of gold now found in the nullahs in this part of the country, was derived from this source—iron pyrites, as is well known, often yield a small amount of gold."

"I have occasionally met with small 'pebbles' of gold of a pear-shape, and so smooth that at first I thought that they must have come from the goldsmith's furnace; but I subsequently met with them in the gravel removed from villages, and where it was impossible to conceive that an artificial product of this kind could have found its way."

"It is stated that the gold in Australia, when found in small pieces, has this appearance, looking as if it had undergone fusion in a furnace."—Aytoun's Report, Dec. 1852. "Geological Papers of Western India, 1857," Carter, p. 402.

⁵⁸ In 1863 he was informed by Government that small quantities of gold were found in the Dambal Hills. "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 18.

ernment Chemical Analyser said that the sand consisted of very minute quantities of gold. There was no lead or other metal, and gold was in too small a quantity to repay the cost of working. In 1861, an Australian gold-digger offered to visit the place and make further search. He desired to examine the Kupputgudd Hills for a joint stock company and not for Government. He was given the opportunity. In 1862 the Australian, Mr. Le Souef, informed Government that he had discovered gold near Sortur and requested Government sanction to secure that land for the Company. In 1865 he asked for a tract of land between Kumta and Hubli, and consented to pay Government a royalty for all gold obtained. In 1866 the Government consented to look into his application, provided he stated precisely the nature of the concessions he required, and showed that his scheme had some chance of success. Before this letter was sent, the adventurer had disappeared. It was found that Le Souef had spent Rs.1,50,000 of the Company's money and obtained no return except a few small nuggets of Australian gold.⁵⁹

59 "In 1874 Mr. R. B. Foote was sent to survey the hills. After a careful research in the geology of the surrounding territory Mr. Foote noticed that, even if the reefs yielded a fair amount of gold, mining would have serious difficulties to contend with. No timber or fuel was available except at very great distances, and water was very scarce except during the rainy season.

"Captain Newbold (1842-1845) estimated the yearly out-turn of wash gold from the Sortur, Harti and Don streams after an average monsoon, at about 200 ounces. But Mr. Foote in 1874 was of opinion that he could only set down about one-tenth of Captain Newbold's estimate. That so few washers were attracted proved that the return was small. In Mr. Foote's opinion the prospects of success were not enough to justify an outlay of capital in large mining works."—"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 24.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION

(1818-1843)

COLONEL MUNRO, who had been entrusted with the territories which included a part of Dharwar acquired from the Peshwa by the Treaty of Poona in 1817, was of the opinion that the late Maratha Government from its foundation had been one of the most destructive that had ever existed in India.¹ An opinion which Munro shared with Elphinstone and other early administrators that the predatory spirit of Shivaji continued to grow all the more when the Maratha power expanded from the Ganges to the Kaveri. This unhappy impression was the outcome of the weak administration of the last Peshwa which was visible in deserted villages, bad communications, arbitrary exactions "and often plunder of whole property." Well might Munro write:

"All the trading classes are anxious for the expulsion of the Mahrattas, because they interrupt their trade by arbitrary exactions, and often plunder them of their whole property..."

"It is not a matter for surprise, therefore, that . numbers of the ryots had fled away to the adjacent Mysore territories, that revenue accounts were in a state of the utmost confusion where they existed at all, that all rules settling the assessment had disappeared."²

As in the Bombay Deccan so in the Southern Maratha Country utmost confusion prevailed on the advent of the British. The period of transition (1818-1843) is marked with difficulty in almost every sphere of administration. Here, as in Maharashtra, the British continued the Maratha method of assessment, revenue, customs, and in other spheres, gradually feeling their way toward reforms that would suit the people, the circumstances, and, above all, entrench their power firmly.

"Q. 5252. What system of revenue management did you introduce into the Southern Mahratta Country after its conquest by Sir Thomas Munro in 1819?—The ryotwar system was introduced in the Southern Mahratta Country. The Mahratta managers of the district had for years past been accustomed during the Peshwa's Government to the

¹ Letter from Munro to the Governor General.

² "Land Revenue in Bombay," Rogers, pp. 354, 355

farming system under which districts were let out to the highest bidder, and by them again underlet to other renters."³

This system was followed by grave consequences both to the ryots as well as to the making of proper revenue accounts and settlements. There was no miras in the Southern Maratha Country, and according to Chaplin permanent occupancy, though recognised, did not confer similar advantages.⁴

Before a survey was undertaken, the Principal Collector proceeded in his *jummabundy* as follows: Either he or an assistant made the *mouzewar* settlement of all the villages in each pergunna, and the individual distribution of rent in one or more; that of the rest was made by the mamlutdar, checked by the Collector's revision. Disputes were settled by *Punchayet* of ryots. Notice of the ryot's intention to throw up land was required, and his return to such as may have been improved by him was permitted on favourable terms. Great encouragement was held out to improvements in irrigation. The grass lands were rented, but a common retained for the village cattle. Distraint of the implement of husbandry and trade was not allowed. The ryots were collectively responsible for balances, but it was not enforced except in peculiar circumstances. All balances of one year were remitted if not realised before the first *kust* of the following season, and the unemployed soldiery⁵ were encouraged in agriculture.⁶

Each ryot under the Marathas, wrote the Principal Collector, held four descriptions of lands: *challee*, *kuttgoota*, *khundmukta* and *cowl*. The first seemed to have been the original land in the ryot's possession, which from long occupancy had been most improved, the rent of which was calculated upon a standard rate. The *kuttgoota khundmukta* and

³ "Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee (1831)," p. 802

⁴ Letter to the Honourable Court, Nov 27, 1822

"You have found in the Southern Mahratta Country.. where no meeras right at all is to be traced, no hereditary or permanent tenants"—There is everywhere in India, where I have been, a right of occupancy so long as the public dues are paid. It has been frequently invaded, but the right has, in my opinion, always existed under good government"—"Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1831," p. 802.

⁵ In Letter No 199 of July 20, 1820, Mr Thackeray, writing to Mr. Chaplin on the scheme of granting waste lands to sibbundies (soldiers), draws his attention to a scheme of such grant of waste lands acceptable to the sibbundies, who belonged to a particular place, and who would change their "swords into ploughshares." The local knowledge of some of these sibbundies qualified them admirably as policemen. To such men a fair measure of land in every village was to be given with a pay of Rs3 per month

⁶ Extract from Revenue Letter of Nov. 5, 1823

cowl lands had generally been allowed to the ryots on lighter terms, while by extra putti the assessment on the *chalee* had become greater than it could bear.

The *chalee* alone was subject to the payment of all the cesses. The *kuttgoota* generally paid the standard rate and the accustomed cess; while the amount payable for the *khundmukta* was a low fixed rate according to previous engagement with the holder. *Cowls* were granted when land had been long waste, and secured its enjoyment for a certain number of years as rent free.

A ryot was not allowed to relinquish any part of his *chalee* land; but to enable him to pay the heavy assessment on it, he was allowed to hold a certain portion of *kuttgoota* and *khundmukta*, or *cowl* lands. He was also permitted to cultivate Inam lands which were obtainable on favourable terms. When a *chalee* ryot failed to pay his quota, it was made up by others and recovered by them from him when circumstances permitted. All the *chalee* ryots were permanent residents in the village and had a voice in its management. In rights and position they resembled the mirasdars of the Deccan. A ryot, refusing to cultivate his *chalee* lands, was refused the right to graze his cattle on the common waste lands, and of cultivating the land of the Inamdar. He was frequently subjected to a house tax, and looked upon as a man who had shirked his responsibility.

Temporary residents, or cultivators, were not required to hold *chalee* lands, but neither were they entitled to interfere with the management of the village affairs, nor to the privilege of cultivating on *cows*, or Inam lands. They usually cultivated on *kuttgoota* or *khundmukta* tenures.

It is easy to learn how this system of land management grew up. Originally, all the village lands were probably subject to a single rate of assessment called the *Rukhum* or standard. This was subsequently increased by the addition of puttis, until the land could no longer be retained in cultivation, and it became necessary to permit the ryots to hold certain portions of it on more favourable terms; thus giving rise to *kuttgoota*, which originally paid only the standard rate. In process of time the *kuttgoota* also became burdened with puttis, and the decay of cultivation in consequence suggested the necessity of propping up the system by grants of land on *khundmukta* and *cowl* tenures. The assessment under this land system also varied from village to village with the standard of measurement, which varied for all denominations

of the land tenures described. It can also be ascertained that they varied in extent according to the quality of the soil, a fact which was corroborated by the original *Rukhum* or uniform standard rate being generally applicable to all village lands.

The above may be considered a favourable view of the Maratha management in its best period. Under Baji Rao, the farming system, as already stated, reduced land management to speculation, disregarding all tenures and rights.⁷ Lands with any fixity of tenure such as the *chalee* and *kuttgoota* were burdened with an assessment far beyond their value. The lowly assessed *khundmukta* and *cowl* lands were only held for limited periods, and the tenants liable to be ousted at their expiration, or made to pay the full assessment. And even Inam lands were made valueless by difficulties interposed in the way of their cultivation, and the tax indirectly laid upon them by which they were made to contribute toward the rental of the heavily assessed Government lands.

In the early years of the British management of the Karnatak, both Chaplin and Thackeray "did not differ materially from the Mahratta system" except in one particular. The ryotwar system of revenue distribution was henceforward made by the Collector instead of being left to the village officers and *chalee* cultivators as before. We have now the opportunity to quote Captain Wingate's criticism in his survey report of 1844 on the British ryotwar settlement.

"I cannot but consider," he wrote, "this change of system, which took out of the hands of the villagers the ryotwar distribution of the revenue, and gave it into those of our district stipendiaries, to have been unfortunate in many respects, and to have added another fruitful element of confusion to those already existing.... Mr. Thackeray writing in 1821 admits... in his observations... the following remarks: 'Even now, after all our statistical experience in the total absence of a uniform measure and a regular standard of assessment, it is impossible to say exactly what should be the assessment on a given piece of land in any village.' In truth the villagers themselves had alone any knowledge of the true state of affairs and were, in consequence, the only parties capable of arriving at a just decision regarding the proper dis-

⁷ Mr. Chaplin wrote in his Jummabundy Report of 1818-19 that "the Patels and hereditary heads of villages were often displaced to make room for persons agreeing to pay a higher revenue, and cesses upon cesses of the most arbitrary nature were collected until the original field assessment was entirely obliterated."—Report No. 445 of Oct. 25, 1844.

tribution of the village rental. And although by continuing with them the power of doing so, instances of undue partiality and oppressive exactions would unquestionably have been perpetuated, still so dependent were the village officers on the rest of the community, and so much at one the individual interests of all the villagers, that we may rest assured that the former would not have ventured to push their exactions so as to outrage either public opinion or former usage.⁸ The case was wholly different with our stipendiary district officers, who were quite unconnected with and independent of the villages, whose internal administration was thus placed within their power. And I myself have little hesitation in ascribing to the measure under discussion much of that remarkable and almost universal corruption, which has been disgraceful, if characteristic, of our native revenue servants in this part of the country." The next unhappy consequence was the unequal assessment which led to large grants of remission. The district officers often pocketed the amount taken out for the ryot. The tide of corruption was thus "swelled, and the already bewildering position of the Collector, surrounded by fresh causes of perplexity and anxiety" was augmented all the more.

In justice to the memory of the able Chaplin and Thackeray, Wingate said that they were fully aware of the evils of the early revenue system, and "never contemplated its continuance beyond a very limited period." Chaplin adverting to the state of confusion, wrote in 1819: "I am for these reasons induced to recommend that no survey, so essential to end the chaos, be immediately undertaken, but that it shall be postponed until one or two years experience under the Coolwar system, carried on with much forbearance and moderation, shall have put us in a condition to judge the resources of our new dominions." Thackeray had proceeded by instituting a detailed field survey according to Sir Munro's plan in the ceded districts. This survey, undertaken in a single district due to Thackeray's "multifarious duties as Collector, Judge and Political Agent" could not be carried out with satisfaction. After his lamented death, the operation seemed to have fallen almost completely under native management, and its unsatisfactory results, according to Wingate, were not under such circumstances a matter for astonishment.

⁸ Here is evidence that Wingate was conscious of the relations of the villagers and their officers like the Patel and the Coolcurnee; yet it was Wingate who was responsible for changing these healthy relations in the village communities by making the village officers stipendiary servants of the Government, no longer dependent on the villagers.

The Karnatak, on British occupation, comprised the Dharwar Collectorate, covering no less than twenty-one extensive talukas, each averaging a revenue of about a lac and fifty thousand. This entire territory was then popularly known as the "Carnatic." The administration, on Colonel Munro's departure, was entrusted to Mr. Chaplin who undertook the settlement of the territory. Elphinstone was then on a similar duty in the Bombay Deccan. The most important task with which the first Principal Collector and Political Agent was faced was the re-inhabitation of the numerous deserted villages. If the new possession was to be made flourishing and prosperous, if those deserted homesteads were again to show signs of life, then it was essential that the new administrator ought to offer as tempting terms as possible to attract the ryot to his old haunts again. In the May of 1819 Chaplin issued his Istawa⁹ for deserted villages.

The Istawa was to be granted to the villages completely deserted, and which at the time yielded no revenue. (a) Villages with one or two inhabited houses and whose land rent did not exceed Rs 200 were to be considered deserted and given the benefit of the Istawa. (b) Istawa in such villages was to be granted for the term of six to seven years. (c) The Istawadar had to grant *cowl* to the ryots agreeable to the established *cowlnama*, distinguishing the description of soil, the number of years it had lain waste, etc. (d) The Istawadar was himself to make all necessary advances of *tuckawi* and bear all expenses and labour requisite for that object. In consideration he was to be given an Inam free of rent subject to certain conditions.¹⁰ This Inam being considered not sufficient, further inducement was held out to the Istawadar in the form of 20 per cent of the collections from cultivated land paying a full rent, one half of the collection from black land held upon a *cowl* for seven years, and one-fourth of the collections on land held on annually increasing *cowl*. On the expiration of the Istawa, he was to hold the office of a Patel with the Inam and fees annexed to it. (e) The fields of the deserted villages were to be measured, and should there be no account of the old *kumal* assessment, a new one was to be drawn up and collections were to be made conformable to that standard. (f) If the old Patels should undertake the Istawa of their village, it was to be granted with their old *miras*, provided they could prove their possession

⁹ The entire document will be found in the Record Book, "The Period of Transition (1818-1826)."

¹⁰ For details see "The Period of Transition (1818-1826)."

to it within the last thirty years. (g) If no Mirasdar¹¹ be forthcoming, the whole of the Inam field was to be annexed to Government lands; should the old Patel refuse the Istawa, only half of his old Inam was to be kept in his possession. If, at the end of two or three years, no improvement, either in cultivation or in population, be discernible in the village, then the Istawa was to be annulled and the Inam and other advances were not to be continued. (h) Should the Istawadar really exert himself, the whole of the *sirkar* lands of the village were to be placed at his disposal under certain conditions.¹² (i) The Istawadar was not to grant *cowl* to any ryot belonging to other villages within the Company's limit. (j) The old Inams were to be confirmed in the case of the village servants (*Bara Bullockee*), Brahmins, temples, etc. (k) A separate *cowl* was to be granted to persons paying the Mohturfa tax; revenue from toddy and liquor was to be paid separately to the Government; no customs duties were to be levied within villages held on Istawa, and timber for houses in Istawa villages was exempted from duty.

In the *cowlnama* for waste lands we learn of a gradual scale of rents according to the years a land has lain fallow, its condition when taken up for tillage, the texture of its soil, and various other conditions prevalent at the time¹³. Special clauses were also laid down for the grant of rice lands and the baghyaet.¹⁴ So long as the ryot paid his stipulated rent he was to remain the occupant of that field, and could on no account be removed from it. Villagers resorting from their own to other neighbouring villages were not allowed to hold waste land on *cowl*, but should there be some just ground for quitting their former village, they were to be allowed to hold waste lands on *cowl* provided they consented to occupy the same extent of cultivated land as they paid rent for in the village from which they had emigrated. Patels were permitted to grant waste lands at the cultivating season subject to confirmation by the Amildar, in agreement with the established rules. If the ryot failed to clear the land of weeds, grass, etc., as stipulated in the *cowl*, and render his plot fit for cultivation, the following rules were to be observed: (a) Should the land not be cleared at the expiration of

¹¹ There was no Meeras in the Southern Maratha Country, yet Mr. Chaplin in the above Istawa devotes Articles 10, 11, and 12 to Meerasdars. It appears that there must have been a Meeras tenure for the village Patel here, as in Maharashtra.

¹² For complete details see the Record Book (Article 13).

¹³ See "The Cowlnama for Waste Lands" as given in the Record Book, Articles 1 to 5. Detail prices to be paid for various descriptions of lands are also given.

¹⁴ Articles 6 and 7 deal with rice and garden lands.

the *cowl* the cultivator was to pay the full rent annually till he cleared it. (b) It was optional to collect from him the amount required to pay the expense of clearing the land.

Besides these *cows* and Istawas, Chaplin's successor, Mr Thackeray, was anxious to grant waste lands for the purpose of building. That practice would according to him recall deserters, and he was desirous of trying its effects upon one or two villages. But Thackeray was doubtful of the success of his scheme. Firstly, it would seem unjust to the old inhabitants to have the new-comers granted this privilege, and secondly, whether the capital, labour, and stock of a large family would not go farther in a concentrated rather than in a divided state, as the grant of waste land for houses would induce many persons, who then resided under the same roof, to set up independently.¹⁵

In spite of these early efforts to bring back the ryots to their deserted holdings, Thackeray wrote a year later (1820) that "further indulgence was necessary to recall those ryots who were driven to desert by the oppression of the late Government."¹⁶ Many of them had now absented themselves for several years, as they had settled down in foreign villages and become a part of the community there. Under such circumstances, no ordinary temptation would induce them to return. The zemindars, when consulted, were of the opinion that a Proclamation should be issued inviting all deserters to return, holding out to them protection and liberal treatment, promising to them either the house they formerly occupied, or the site to build upon, and offering to such as may require, an advance not exceeding Rs.100 to assist in building their new homes. Even these proposals were lent a willing ear, and every effort was put forth to revive peace and plenty in the conquered territories.

From the acquisition of the Southern Maratha Country in 1818 till 1843, the Maratha assessment remained without revision.¹⁷ From 1818 to 1828, a survey of the Collectorate was attempted and measurements were to a small extent adopted. Lieutenant Perry, the only officer in the Survey Department in 1820, proposed to commence his survey in the country between the rivers Varda and Tungbhadra. This tract of the country, according to Thackeray, was much better defined than any other part of the district. It also seemed highly desirable that the

¹⁵ Letter No. 171 of March 22, 1820.

¹⁶ Letter No. 179 of May 14, 1820.

¹⁷ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 453.

survey should commence in that part of the country which was mixed with foreign land and traversed by disputed boundaries. Perry was, therefore, to survey the eastern talukas which bordered the Nizam's dominions.¹⁸ Two years later, in 1822, a small part of the Dharwar district appears to have been surveyed. "Dharwar was surveyed about two and a half years ago for experiment's sake," wrote Thackeray, "and Goolunjikop was twice measured. Gurug was only measured once, but as the ablest surveyors were employed there, the result is perhaps too favourable to serve as a test of the general accuracy of a revenue survey."¹⁹ The survey activities continued throughout 1823 under Captain Grafton, Lieuts. Le Messurers, Boyd and Campbell.²⁰ In spite of these survey measures, no revised assessment was carried out.

During the first twenty-five years (1818-1843), the land-rent settlement was a very high nominal demand which called forth large remissions every year. The assessment was very high both on whole villages as well as on individual holdings. The old kumal standard was still kept as a guide in spite of the changed circumstances, resulting in a demand impossible for the ryot to meet, and the Government to realise. As in Maharastra, the country could ill-afford to satisfy the administrators with a revenue equal to the collections realised in the heyday of the Marathas. Thus the Karnatak has the same sorry tale to relate as regards the revenue and prices during the twenty-five years of early British administration as the Bombay Deccan.

At the very commencement of British rule the farming system we know was stopped, and the ryotwar introduced. The settlement was a work of great difficulty because in many cases the village accounts were missing or removed to distant places, and in several instances destroyed or withheld by the village officers. Munro had informed Elphinstone that there was no opportunity during the campaign of acquiring any knowledge of the resource of the country, and that it would require a year's labour before any accurate estimate of the state of revenue during the last eight or ten years could be formed. Chaplin, writing to Elphinstone, on the 30th November 1818, stated that the accounts presented by him should be considered as abstract of the collections, since the enemy in all the districts, except a small tract south of the Varda, had collected much of the revenue, and in some which were occupied last, the whole. Besides, the mamlutdars of the late Government had tried

¹⁸ Letter No. 216 of Sept. 6, 1820.

¹⁹ Letter No. 565 of August 24, 1822.

²⁰ Letter No. 824 of Dec. 8, 1823.

to collect all that they possibly could for their own benefit. The heads of the villages followed the example and then absconded to avoid payment to the mamludars. The new Amildars who succeeded to the office, partly from their inability to ascertain with precision what had not been collected, and partly from connivance at the malversation of others, included in the payment to the late Government large sums which had been embezzled by Deshpandes, Desais, Deshkulkurnies and hosts of other revenue officers who swarmed the district and usurped a large share of the management, as well as the produce of the country.²¹ Such were the difficulties to be surmounted before order could be restored and a fair revenue be collected. With these difficulties, whatever information could be procured was welcome, and the assessment had to be fixed on what seemed, as nearly as possible, to be an average rate.

In 1818 the district of Dharwar was about 210 miles long and 70 to 150 miles broad including 2,152 villages and 285 hamlets. The administration of this large tract called the "Carnatic," which comprised the present Collectorate of Belgaum, Dharwar and Bijapur, was then included into one Collectorate. The entire District was divided into two parts, the Principal Division including 19 talukas and the Bijapur Division including 5 talukas.²²

In the year 1818-19 out of a gross revenue of Rs 23,94,540 a net revenue of Rs.22,00,140 was realised. The previous year's balances were given up, but a greater part of the outstandings were collected from the ryots and remained in the hands of the Desars, Patels, Kunums, etc., and wherever this could be ascertained, the Government collected the amount.²³ In the revenue accounts of 1819-20 alkari yielded Rs.38,250, and customs Rs.1,49,000, giving with land revenue a total of Rs.25,11,480 of which Rs.22,29,980 only were realised. In 1820-21 the gross revenue stood at Rs.27,10,960 the realisations showed Rs.25,56,270 which was an increase over 1819-20 collections by Rs.3,26,390. Part of this increase was due to the acquisition of fresh territory made over by one Chintamunroa Putwurdhun.²⁴ Besides this acquisition, new talukas were ceded by the Nizam also²⁵. The ceded pergunnas were Mohol, Oondur-

²¹ Letter No. 38 of Nov. 30, 1818

²² The talukas of the Principal Division in 1821-22 were, Darwar, Mesecerecotta, Bettagerra, Pursugerra, Nowlgond, Badami, Bagurecotta, Hoongond, Patchapoor, Dumull, Bankapoor, Hangull, Andoor, New Hoobly, Raneebednore, Goottull, Code, Kangenella and Sirhutty. The Bijapoor Division included Bijapoor, Kolar Mohondapoor, Gurrekokutunor, Sholapur and Burdole.

²³ Letter No. 7 of Sept. 14, 1818.

²⁴ Letter No. 174 of May 3, 1820.

²⁵ Letter No. 371 of July 9, 1821.

tappa, Teimburni, Burbhole, and Munroop. Thus the revenue in the first three years of British occupation showed a continued rise:

Rs.22,00,140 in 1818-19

Rs.22,29,980 in 1819-20

Rs.25,56,270 in 1820-21

Heavy outstandings in 1820-21 and 1821-22 showed that, in spite of the rise in revenue, the assessment had been fixed too high. The land rent for Fusly 1228 (1818) for the entire district was Rs 20,35,851 while the estimated amount of tuckavi for cultivation came to Rs.40,000. These tuckavis made the ryot independent of sawkars and money-lenders "whose influence had been hitherto so injurious"²⁶ There were very few ryots who possessed stock and capital sufficient to cultivate their lands without the aid of a loan. This loan would be advanced by the sawkar, if it was not allowed by the sirkar, and the ryot would have to pay interest at the rate of from 2½ per cent to 30 per cent instead of 12 per cent. Nor was this exorbitant rate of interest the only burden imposed, for at the time of harvest the ryot was obliged to part with his produce at the cheapest season of the year, and all the profit of this grain trade was reaped by the sawkar.²⁷ In 1820, the tuckavi rose to Rs.53,500 when the land rent was Rs.22,11,000. In 1821 it fell to Rs.51,500.²⁸ In the April of 1821, Thackeray requested the Commissioner to allow him to grant tuckavi to poor traders to set up shops. The repayment of a tuckavi for such a purpose should have a longer extension of the term, and the term was to be fixed with reference to the means of the borrower and members of his family.²⁹ In the December of 1821, Thackeray requested the advance of a tuckavi of Rs.66,000,³⁰ and a year later in the September of 1822 a sum of Rs 88,350, an amount, according to Chaplin, which bore the proportion of nearly 3½ per cent to the expected revenue of the current year.³¹ This demand was due to a failure of crops and disease among the cattle in 1820. It was in the same year that nearly 50 per cent of the great khurif crop of lall jawari failed, which formed 27 per cent of all agricultural produce.³²

²⁶ Letter No 154 of Jan. 21, 1820

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Letter No 257 of Dec. 1, 1820

²⁹ Letter No 436 of Dec. 14, 1821

³⁰ Letter No 532 of June 16, 1822

³¹ Letter No 581 of Sept. 19, 1822

³² Letter No 240 of Oct. 29, 1820

Besides an unbalanced assessment, short crops, cholera, and murrain prevented Dharwar from making any progress in the early years of British management. In 1818-19 and 1819-20, in the population of about 5,56,000, the loss from cholera was estimated at 25,000 of whom about 10,000 were land-holders³³. Flight seemed the one chance of escape from death, and numbers fled from their homes. All throughout 1818 to 1821, the crops were so scanty that the smaller land-holders and the field labourers suffered severely, and their resources were further crippled by disease among the cattle. Substantial farmers were very rare at Dharwar. In many villages the land-holders had not enough live-stock to keep up the cultivation. Here, as in the Bombay Deccan, the transit duties on grain pressed very heavily on the ryots. The accumulation of road dues prevented the ryot from exporting his surplus produce to neighbouring or distant markets. Thus the ryot was forced to sell his grain on the spot to carriers or baniyas who alone could afford to carry on the wholesale trade and to advance road duties. Such were the conditions prevalent in the first three years (1818-21) of British administration.

In 1823, both the south-west and north-east monsoons failed. Thackeray, returning from a tour of the southern talukas in November, stated that the reports of the Amildars regarding the season were by no means exaggerated. The wet crops that depended on rain alone had almost entirely failed, and many of those supplied by artificial irrigation, depending on tanks, were exhausted. The price of rice had increased by 30 per cent, and that of jawari by 25 per cent. Even the Jagir villages were suffering.³⁴ In September a Tuckavi of Rs.1,03,600 amounting to 34 per cent of the revenue of Rs.27,01,349 was requested.³⁵ The estimated land and customs revenue was nearly 4 per cent below the revenue of the preceding year, and since a large balance was still outstanding, Thackeray recommended a further remission of about Rs.50,000 or Rs.60,000. Even the Jagirdars had allowed a remission to the extent of 25 per cent.³⁶ Such was the year preceding the famine of 1824.

³³ Letter No. 1 of Aug. 9, 1818

³⁴ Letter No. 810 of Nov. 16, 1823.

"In November of that year (1823), the rice crop entirely failed, and the supply of waters usually found in the ponds was exhausted long before the grain ripened. Only near Dharwar, millet suffered less. Since October, rice had risen 30 per cent and Indian millet 25 per cent."—"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 470.

³⁵ Letter dated Sept. 16, 1823. For more details see the Record Book.

³⁶ Letter No. 742 of July 27, 1823. For revenue details see the Record Book.

In 1824 the early monsoon again failed. The Amildars sent their "Urzees" describing the effects of the drought on cultivation and all farming stock. These communications related chiefly to the talukas near the ghauts, but in the eastern villages the distress was still greater.³⁷ Doves of cattle were sent to the western jungles for pasture, and at some places the owners gave up half their stock to procure forage for the remainder. Thackeray requested that all the common pastures should be thrown open, and no grazing tax (Hoolhunee) be levied "until a supply of rain shall have produced relief."³⁸ In conformity with this suggestion, a circular was issued to ail the Amildars. The price of bullocks due to the scarcity of forage had fallen by 25 per cent to 30 per cent.³⁹ The price of grain was in general about 35 per cent higher than the previous year, and if the grain duties had not been abolished it might have been dearer. Munro, the sub-collector, reported a serious failure of mungare crops (jawari, bajri, toowar, moongh, etc.) in his division. Great mortality had prevailed among the cattle, and in the village of Mungoli, where mortality had been much less than elsewhere, 422 head of cattle were reported to have died out of 3,510. The mortality was attributed principally to the want of forage and diseases incident to it. The price of jawaii had risen 100 per cent, and that of kurbi 900 per cent, while the fall in the price of cattle was 50 per cent within six weeks.⁴⁰ Stevenson's report regarding the conditions at Ranibednore, Gootul, and Kod, were equally depressing and melancholy.⁴¹ Even the sugar-cane owing to lack of water in the tanks had entirely failed. Prices in these talukas had not risen owing to large quantities of jawari stored in the granaries being brought into the markets.⁴² In Ranibednore alone 2,318 cattle had perished; for more than two months the animals had subsisted on leaves of trees and strips of the branches of the Palmira. Many ryots had left their homes to save their cattle by driving them into the forests of Mysore where there was a little verdure. Accompanying these testimonials of the Civil Servants were found poignant day-to-day records of the Amildars of different perguntas.⁴³ To quote a few passages:

³⁷ Letter No. 907 of July 25, 1824.

³⁸ See the Circular accompanying Letter No. 907.

³⁹ Letter No. 914 of August 13, 1824.

⁴⁰ Letter of July 31, 1824.

⁴¹ Letter of Aug. 12, 1824.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Report 926 of Sept. 15, 1824.

"16th August. No rain the ryuts having sold their property are contracting debts to subsist—this even is insufficient and they are obliged to starve for a day or two.

"27th August. Upwards of 4,000 head of cattle have died in all the summuts—not a blade of grass is procurable... No cotton or white jowaree seeds are procurable.

"31st August. The cattle have been driven to Mulunad and it is reported that half of them are dying there of swelled necks caused by sting of large flies⁴⁴—no water in the tanks nor can the inhabitants get any for cooking purposes."

At the end of the monsoon on the 29th September, Munro wrote, "The rise of prices in the different articles of consumption—the continued low price of cattle where a dreadful mortality has taken off one half of them, are symptomatic of a distress which I am afraid there is too much reason to apprehend under the almost unprecedented drought and scorching heat by which every blade of vegetation is drooping."⁴⁵ There were some partial showers on or about the 9th September, but too late in the season to save the early crops. All that could save the Collectorate was its own supply of grain of former years, or importation from the neighbouring districts. The latter was impossible since 1824 was a year of widespread famine even in Maharashtra.

Famine was not the only scourge of 1824. Close on its heels followed the merciless cholera. Twenty deaths had occurred within three days at Nowlur, and Dr. Bell, accompanied by a native dresser, had been sent where the epidemic prevailed most.⁴⁶ In August, Thackeray wrote that the deaths by cholera were not being carefully recorded; he feared that the number shown was far less than the actual figures.⁴⁷ The number of deaths that had occurred within his own division, since the season of cultivation commenced, was estimated to be 1,500. Cholera had not been so destructive in Mr. Munro's division as mortality among cattle;⁴⁸ while Mr. Stevenson wrote that he was sorry to say that not

⁴⁴ "In Bagrecotta and Bendanoor no less than 1,128 head of cattle died by the 13th of August. By the 5th of September Dummull lost 5,224 cattle."

⁴⁵ Letter of Sept. 29, 1824.

⁴⁶ Letter No. 907 of July 25, 1824. The talukas most affected were: Dummull, Nowligoond, Badami, Purusgurh, Bagulcote, Goottull, and Patchapur. Letter No. 889 of June 6, 1824.

⁴⁷ Letter No. 914 of Aug. 13, 1824.

⁴⁸ Letter of July 31, 1824.

only the cattle but the inhabitants had also greatly suffered from the effects of the season. The returns from the talukas reported 584 deaths; in Ranibednore 150; in Kod 184; and in Gootul 250.⁴⁹ These were the days when little trust could be placed in the figures supplied. In spite of these misfortunes, it appears that Dharwar suffered less than the Bombay Deccan in 1824.⁵⁰ In January of 1825, when reviewing the state of the Karnatak, Chaplin noticed that since 1819 the land revenue had increased by Rs.4 lacs.

In 1825, the heavens wept copiously to make up the deficit of 1824. So heavy was the rainfall in the country bordering the mountains that it caused considerable damage;⁵¹ yet, upon the whole, the season was considered more favourable than had been seen for many years. The Amildar of Patchapur wrote that the rain had been so exceedingly heavy that people had not seen so much rain for the last ten years. Houses had fallen down. In the paddy fields the water was two "guz" high, and had carried away part of the grain planted. At Bedi, jawari, rice, ragghi, etc. were all washed away, and in some places they rotted. The tappall had been at a standstill. At Bagavady, twenty houses had fallen. Such was the nature of the reports from all talukas. The disease among the cattle had mostly subsided, but the scourge of cholera continued to take its heavy toll in various talukas.

The season of 1825, from the evidence before us, was extremely destructive. From the reports of Messrs. Eden, Fullerton, and Harris, Mr Baber, who succeeded Thackeray wrote that a good deal of damage was done to the habitation of the people, and there was reason to fear that some villages on the banks of the Gutprabha, Malperbha and Tung-bhadra 'had been entirely swept away.'⁵² In view of this destruction, tuckavi advances were made to those who had lost their property.⁵³ This excessive rain, though it appeared to have lessened the cattle disease, struck the ryots with fever and ague, not to speak of the cholera. At places, the ryots fled into the open "covering themselves with material they could find in the jungle." They had lost their property and their stored grain was completely gutted by water. The Krishna reached

⁴⁹ Letter of Aug. 12, 1824.

⁵⁰ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 471.

⁵¹ Letter No. 1191 of Aug 16, 1825.

⁵² "At Purusghur the Malpurba overflowed its banks, about 10 or 20 fathoms. In Kittoor no boats could pass across it. In Badami its overflowing destroyed 244 houses in 13 villages. In Hoongoond the Malpurba washed away the villages of Buddghal, Moorgoonoor, Bussavehal, etc."

⁵³ Letter No. 1232 of Sept. 9, 1825.

such a height, inundating the surrounding country, that such a sight had not been seen in the last forty years. At places no correct information could be procured due to the overflowing of the rivers. At Rhone, seventy-four houses had fallen, and a village completely washed away.

In the midst of these misfortunes, cholera continued to take its toll. It had broken out chiefly in the eastern and southern talukas, "but the ravages appear to be greater at Mungoley where the number of deaths by last account... was sixty per day and on the 7th instant seventy-five."⁵⁴ The awful malady had broken out with malignancy in Dharwar, Misrikota, Hubli, Purusghur and Badami. Baber sent Mr. Turnbull, accompanied with native dressers, and ordered the mamludars to engage persons on a monthly salary of Rs 10 to go with the requisite medicines to remote villages where proper medical aid could not reach. Dr. Tunibull reported that no such persons could be procured to undertake the risk of going far into the cholera-stricken interior.⁵⁵ To quote just a few figures of the deaths that occurred between April to July, we have Pursgurh with 768, Hungund within one month (May) with 546, Dharwar 532, Kittur 528, Badami 510, Hubli 403, Ranibednore 322, Bedi 212, bringing the total deaths (including the figures of other talukas) to 5,018 in four months⁵⁶

Within two years (1824 and 1825) such ravages had taken place that years of care would be required to revive the lost energy of the unhappy ryots. Chaplin knew that the increase in the rental by 4 lacs since 1819, combined with bad seasons and short harvests, was pressing heavily on the ryot. Prices also remained low⁵⁷ in spite of bad harvests. The increase in the outstanding from Rs.32,910 in 1818-19, to Rs.1,34,350 in 1823-24 showed difficulty in realising the Government demand.⁵⁸ These facts made the Commissioner realise that the next year's settlement should be extremely moderate.

In 1826-27, Dharwar consisted of nineteen sub-divisions with an average yearly rental of Rs.65,060.⁵⁹ Mr. Baber intended to make Bagalkote the chief station of the eastern talukas. A survey seemed to be afoot in the talukas of Dambal and Badami in the March of 1826. The rains were variable, and some parts of the district suffered from

⁵⁴ Letter No. 1114 of May 13, 1825.

⁵⁵ Letter No. 1121 of May 16, 1825.

⁵⁶ Letter No. 1193 of Aug 17, 1825.

⁵⁷ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 471.

⁵⁸ Bonn. Gov. Rev. Rec. 123 of 1825, p. 236.

⁵⁹ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 472.

scarcity of it. There was no cattle disease and slight cholera in Dharwar. The number of deaths by cholera were considerably less than the previous years. In Kod, 54 persons died, 89 in Hungul, 3 in Dharwar, 3 in Navalgund and a great many (the numbers not having been ascertained) in Bankapur⁶⁰ Mr. Baher wrote on 6th April that the expenses then in progress "to arrest this dreadful scourge" would not be in vain. Continued efforts were made to control the epidemic.⁶¹ In several parts the crops suffered from the ravages of rats during this season (1826). The price of jawari varied from 116 lbs to about 96 lbs. the rupee, and the revenue was about Rs.48,200 less than the revenue of the preceding year.

Thomas Marshall, statistical reporter to the Government travelling through the eastern talukas (Bagalkote, Badami and Hungund) during these early years submitted to Government a bold criticism⁶² of the conditions prevalent in that part of the Karnatak. Writing of the British administration in Bagalkote and Badami, he was sorry to say that with the exception of sudden and absolute cessation of internal disorder, there were few or no traces of improvement, and poverty reigned paramount throughout the country.⁶³ The unpropitious seasons had a considerable share in keeping up the poverty, amounting in not a few cases to absolute deficiency of food, but he feared there were scarcely less efficient reasons which he could attempt to explain.

The main criticism was levelled against the land rent. The territory when occupied was found to be reduced by the past management to the most wretched condition. It could not be denied that the ryots were better able to pay the rates levied by the British when the Peshwa's rule commenced than when their rule began; at the former period they had property, at the latter none, every year having made them poorer and poorer, diminishing the number of cultivators and the land cultivated. To make matters worse, besides fixing a high land revenue, there was a continued rise in the rates of assessment every year. "Nothing appears to give the people more uneasiness," wrote Marshall, "than these annual advances of revenue unattended as heretofore, they in my mind undoubtedly are, with any advance in the means of defraying them; they are so like the Peshwa and so unlike the Rastia."

Mr. Chaplin wrote that such remarks appeared to convey the impression that Mr. Thackeray's management of the "Carnatic" must be

60 Letter No. 1437 of April 6, 1826.

61 Letter No. 1449 of April 13, 1826.

62 Statistical Report, 1822, Marshall

63 Ibid., p. 136

injudicious. "Mr. Marshall," he wrote, "was a good deal misinformed in many details of revenue subjects, and that some of his conclusions are drawn from imperfect data."⁶⁴ Mr. Thackeray agreed with the Commissioner and wrote that ever since they came into the possession of the "Carnatic" not a single ryot had been imprisoned for debt, and cases of distraint were very rare.

In 1832 the latter rains completely failed. In addition to extreme drought, parts of Chikodi and Pachapur were visited by two flights of locusts which destroyed every green herb on which they alighted. After the death of Mr. Thackeray, the survey lacked proper supervision and failed. Only patch work assessment, and that the measurement of lands in Dharwar, Navalgund, Dambal, and Pursghur, was accomplished by October 1833. In the remaining fourteen sub-divisions, the assessment continued to be realised as originally imposed in 1818-19. Meantime great encouragement was given to leases, and the cultivation of waste lands.

The seasons of 1833-34 and 1834-35 were generally favourable. The revenue settlement of 1834-35 showed an increase over the previous year. In 1833-34 the rent of Government lands left waste owing to deaths, desertions and poverty, amounted to Rs.31,110. The remissions totalled Rs.1,28,350 of which Rs.99,840 were actually granted for failure of crops. In 1834-35 there suddenly appeared an increase of realisation in nearly every sub-division as high as 18 per cent in some, and as low as 1 per cent in others. This sudden rise of revenue following a year of scarcity appeared common in the Karnatak as in Maharashtra.

The season of 1835-36 was unfavourable. The fall in tillage was explained by over-assessment. Many cattle were lost from starvation, and some were saved by being driven to the western jungles. Considerable areas of land were thrown out of tillage, in consequence of which many ryots sold their live-stock to pay the revenue of the former year. Bagulkote had the worst tale to tell, there was a continued fall in its revenue since the advent of the British. This fall was attributable to various causes as cholera, deficient crops, and increase of weeds. The deficient crops and increase of weeds were symptoms, said the Collector, of bad cultivation arising from poverty.⁶⁵ In Badami a survey assessment had been introduced in 1835, and was perhaps the only taluka where remissions for short crops were not required. In Dambal a

⁶⁴ Letter No. 3 of Sept. 6, 1821.

⁶⁵ Bom. Rev. Rec. 771 of 1837, pp. 8, 9

similar survey as at Badami was introduced in the same year, but with poor results.

The sub-collectorate of Hubli, including the talukas of Ranibednore, Kod, Hangal, Bankapur and Misirkote (1836), were very different from the rest of Dharwar. The landscape changed from the monotonous, black plains to verdant village sites filled with cocoa-palms and the broad-leaved vegetables reminiscent of the Concan. It was a land of ponds; Ranibednore, Kod, Hangal and Bankapur were full of them. The season of 1832-33 had been one of dearth. The next two years (1834 and 1835) were uncommonly favourable and, combined with increased cultivation, caused a fall in the prices which drove some land out of cultivation.

Revenue again fell in 1835-36 by Rs 83,410. Mr Dunlop remarked that the item which showed that the distress of the people had risen from over-assessment, was the large area of land which had passed out of cultivation.⁶⁶ As years passed, the assessment told on the weakening resources of the ryots, and the need for a new survey with lessened land rent was felt in the Karnatak. Mr. Dunlop was of the opinion that the land was so highly assessed that its cultivation did not pay any longer.

In 1836 and 1837 there was a continued fall in revenue. Mr. Blane in charge of Kod and Ranibednore wrote that the consequences of several successive bad seasons had been deplorable, and to make matters worse, there was a serious loss of cattle from the failure of forage. Mr. Ravenscroft of Hubli, Bankapur and Hangal, reported a fall in revenue by Rs.86,800.

In 1837-38 Dumbal alone had shown some fair progress, and that was due to a moderate assessment. In 1838 the rain failed all over the Collectorate. Hubli and Navalgund suffered the most. The succeeding year recorded a heavy fall of rain, a not unusual incident following a year of scarcity. In 1838 Wingate had already begun his survey in Maharashtra, and its success had amply revealed the necessity of a revision settlement with moderate rates, the only panacea to solve the difficulties of the ryot. In 1842-43 everyone looked forward to the coming of the new settlement. The prospect of the revised survey settlement had a great effect on cultivation.

Thus the first twenty-five years of British occupation were fraught with bad seasons, high assessment and fall in prices. The Karnatak

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 24, 25.

presents a similar picture to the Bombay Deccan, both at the opening of the new rule as at the close of the first twenty years of English administration. There is no necessity to probe into the reasons of these early difficulties in the Southern Maratha Country as they bear a close resemblance to the causes already narrated in the former part of this work. The lands that stretched from Khandesh in the north to Dharwar in the south had their fortunes wedged in the past, and could not be faced with problems that could vary in the future.

The land revenue of the Dharwar Collectorate for the ten years preceding the commencement of the new survey settlement was:

Years	Net Land Revenue After Deducting Remissions in Rupees ⁶⁷
1833-34	9,67,948
1834-35	11,02,540
1835-36	9,25,332
1836-37	8,38,840
1837-38	10,82,267
1838-39	9,12,107
1839-40	11,63,304
1840-41	11,62,887
1841-42	11,88,910
1842-43	11,69,551

The number of villages in 1833-34 were 1,142 and increased by 32 in 1842-43, making a total of 1,174 at the close of the decade. The remissions ranged from Rs.18,760 in 1833-34 to Rs.71,991 in 1842-43, reaching a maximum sum of Rs.1,53,089 in 1835-36, Rs.1,16,713 in 1836-37, and Rs 1,28,764 in 1838-39.

During this period (1817-1842), jawari prices at Dharwar fell from 50 lbs the rupee in 1819 to 102 lbs. in 1842.

Years	Pounds the Rupee					Years	Pounds the Rupee				
	Hubbli	Navalgund	Kod	Hangal	Dharwar		Hubbli	Navalgund	Kod	Hangal	Dharwar
1817	100	—	150	—	—	1831	75	144	169	241	105
1818	95	56	163	240	—	1832	60	84	22	243	129
1819	90	60	166	240	50	1833	40	74	96	33	54
1820	95	64	160	240	49	1834	50	52	105	123	60
1821	92	60	153	240	51	1835	45	108	109	150	111

67 "Western India," A. Mackay, p. 354. The "Gazetteer" gives the revenue figures for 1837 to 1843 for the sub-division including 8 talukas, these vary slightly with those quoted above. Rs9,18,422 (1837-38); Rs8,65,067 (1838-39); Rs11,53,291 (1839-40); Rs11,47,066 (1840-41); Rs11,66,554 (1841-42); Rs11,50,821 (1842-43).

Years	Pounds the Rupee				Pounds the Rupee						
	Hubli	Navalgund	Kod	Mangal	Hubli	Navalgund	Kod	Mangal			
1822	80	90	134	241	73	1836	45	124	163	166	90
1823	95	92	137	240	114	1837	47	172	157	147	90
1824	80	96	153	216	102	1838	60	104	169	198	102
1825	71	70	179	241	84	1839	70	100	213	213	78
1826	83	64	157	213	63	1840	75	104	180	210	102
1827	95	72	111	211	96	1841	65	108	172	210	120
1828	100	96	128	240	102	1842	70	112	198	211	102
1829	90	130	179	240	99						
1830	80	120	185	211	98						

A system of inland transit duties existed throughout Maharashtra under the native rule. In the Karnatak also every zamindar exercised, with or without authority, the power of levying tolls on merchandise passing through his territory.⁶⁸ This obnoxious⁶⁹ system was continued for some years after British occupation; and duties of various amounts levied at almost every stage of the journey. In most of the territories these various tolls had been commuted for one general duty, payable to the nearest station.

The duty was generally *ad valorem*, except on salt, tobacco, and a few minor articles. It was levied according to a fixed value on silk

⁶⁸ Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons (Aug 16, 1832), p. 92

⁶⁹"1341 From the nature of your employment, had you any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the system of internal duties in India?—Yes, during my residence in Delhi, I received a very strong impression of the evils of the internal customs system ... I investigated the subject and drew a report which led to the abolition of the internal system in the Bengal and Agra Presidencies and in the Bombay Presidency."

"1342 Will you state what was the nature of the internal customs system? It consisted of a number of custom houses with a multitude of intermediate stations called chokies; which chokies were manned by ill-paid, corrupt native officials, and every merchant, before he was allowed to remove any articles included in the tariff, had to take out a pass called a rowannah, specifying the quantity, the value, and the description of the articles, and all those native officers were charged with the duty of seeing that the articles corresponded with the description in the rowannah, which placed in their hands an unlimited opportunity for corruption; the consequence was that an immense sum was annually exacted from the country.... There were other great evils connected with the system which are too numerous to mention here ... Besides these... other duties are levied on the principal articles of consumption of the different towns.. The consequence was that trade was driven away from the towns, its natural seat; and as articles had to pay both on their importation in the raw state into the town, and again on their exportation in their manufactured shape, it was impossible to carry on any manufacture in the towns in the articles included in the town duty tariff."—Charles Edward Trevelyn, "Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee," Vol. VI, Political or Foreign, August 16, 1832, p. 73.

and indigo. Some articles such as piece goods were necessarily left to be appraised upon examination by the custom-house officers. The pay of these officers was not proportionate to their responsibility, and from the multiplicity of their accounts, little control could be exercised, so that they were in consequence open to corruption.

The collection of inland duties here, as in the Bombay Deccan, was farmed to the highest bidder, who induced the merchants to pass through the district by levying light duties. In the Karnatak also there was the greatest difficulty in obtaining a correct estimate of the trade of the country. The whole system was represented by most of the witnesses as being a fertile source of vexation and annoyance.

In the second year of British occupation, General Pritzler drew William Chaplin's attention to the evils of the inland duties. If, according to the traditional custom, duties were levied on every article in every district through which it passed, the prices of such goods would be so augmented before they reached the soldier that he would not be able to purchase them.⁷⁰ To give immediate relief Chaplin requested the Commissioner (Elphinstone) that since the price of grain was high, it should be exempted from customs duty. He assured Elphinstone that no inconvenience would result because a clause had been inserted in the agreement with the custom farmers stipulating that in event of this immunity being granted, a reduction would be allowed in their rents.⁷¹ Thus the first step to exempt grain from this vexatious system of duty was taken.

These inland duties also became a source of annoyance to the commercial transactions of the Company, especially its investments in cotton. In October 1819, Thackeray, the Principal Collector, forwarded a letter from Mr Oakes, the Commercial Resident, to Elphinstone. Oakes alluded to the number of independent Jagirdars whose territories inter-spersed with the Company's possessions, and made it impossible to avoid the duties to which the Company's investment was subject by them.⁷² Steps, therefore, were to be taken to exempt the Company from the payment of such duties.

In spite of these difficulties, the inland duties continued to be levied though they caused great inconvenience. Great delay and difficulty was experienced in transporting cotton and grain. In 1820, Thackeray made

⁷⁰ Letter from Belgaum, Aug 20, 1819

⁷¹ Letter No 112 of Aug 28, 1819

⁷² Letter No 131 of Oct 28, 1819.

some suggestions to overcome this delay and trouble. He proposed to furnish each sair⁷³ station (custom-choky) with a number of blank "rahdarees" both for grain and cotton transported by Government. These "rahdarees" could be exchanged for the acknowledgement of the Commercial Resident and Commissary respectively at the sair station nearest the places whence the cotton and grain were despatched. The sair chokedar, after giving the regular "rahdaree" in exchange for either a commercial, or commissariat acknowledgement, would send the same to Thackeray and the regular "rahdaree" would accompany the grain or cotton to its destination, being endorsed at each said station on its way. After the arrival of the commodity, the "rahdaree" was to be returned for the purpose of comparison and registration, after which the amount of duty could be easily adjusted⁷⁴.

Duty was not only levied on grain transported from the Company's possessions to those of the Jagirdars, but, according to the Regulation of 1812, "grain exported by sea or passing by land the frontiers of territory under Fort St. George was liable to duty"⁷⁵. Thackeray, writing to the Collector of Bellary, was of the opinion that since both the districts belonged to the Company, and grain was brought for the consumption of troops, the duty made the price very high, and it would therefore be a blessing to exempt grain from frontier duties "even on passing into foreign territory". To support his proposal, Thackeray stated that much grain was imported from the ceded district into the Carnatic and if the duty in the Carnatic was already oppressive, the Collector of Bellary would do well to agree with him in the abolition of the frontier duty which was surely prejudicial to agriculture, as well as to the export trade of his own district⁷⁶.

The amount of the annual exports and imports in the Carnatic was estimated by Thackeray at Rs 69,26,652, of which Rs 11,23,810 was the value of grain, cotton, vegetables and other articles which were exempt from duty in the Concan. The duties and fees derived from the latter class of goods (grain, cotton, etc.) amounted in Fusly 1229 (1820) to Rs.88,004, while those derived from the former yielded Rs 1,28,075.

⁷³"In the Finance Department the term Saver is retained. The Saver-duties mentioned in the accounts, as distinct from Akkally, are probably tow duties, and duties at bazars and markets. All the collections from inconsiderable sources when they are spoken of in the accounts are brought under the general term Saver"—² Report From the Select Committee 1832, p. 9

⁷⁴ Letter No. 213 of Aug 21, 1820

⁷⁵ Letter No. 265 of Dec 22, 1820.

⁷⁶ Letter No. 319 of April 14, 1821

making the whole sair revenue for 1820 Rs.2,16,089. This revenue, wrote Thackeray, had greatly decreased during the last two years.

The proposal of levying an *ad valorem* duty of 2½ per cent on goods other than grain, cotton, vegetables, etc., was in Thackeray's opinion an unhappy innovation. The collection of this *ad valorem* duty, would render it necessary to detain and inspect the whole trade of the country, in order that the trifling proportion of it which was of superior value might be taxed with reference to its worth.⁷⁷ For this and other reasons,⁷⁸ Thackeray desired to continue the renting of sair revenue after exempting from duty sheep,⁷⁹ vegetables, firewood, straw, materials for building and making ploughs, and all implements of trade and agriculture. Grain was cheap in 1822, and Thackeray wrote that it was only worthwhile exporting to a distance in times of scarcity, when temporary remission of duties was attended with great advantage, and would always be allowed.

In the September of 1822, as in the Bombay Deccan, the duty on grain, firewood and other articles was abolished. Grain was sold cheaply, and Thackeray stated that the abolition of duty would lessen its price more, and thereby the ryot would suffer by this fall in its value.⁸⁰ In many large villages through which Thackeray passed in his monthly circuit, the ryot complained that they could not get the usual price for their grain, and to make matters worse, the merchants complained that, owing to the supply being greater than the demand, the grain trade had nearly ceased. But although the ryots in the vicinity of the great market lost, it did general good by enabling the ryots of distant villages to bring their grain duty free to the great markets. This innovation had to be followed by the continuance of levying duty on

⁷⁷ Letter No. 537 of June 23, 1822.

⁷⁸ "If this country were unmixed with foreign territory, or the customs all under one management, if no rosooms were chargeable on the saer—if there was no home trade—and if an *ad valorem* duty would be realized without vexations in question—the Rahdaree system would be a very desirable one.

But as all the Jagheerdars levy duties, as the rosooms payable at each saer station are paid by old prescription, as a 2½ per cent duty would fall heavy on the trade between one town and another and as an *ad valorem* excise cannot be enforced without odious inspection I think there is more to apprehend from innovation..." (Letter No. 537)

⁷⁹ "The sair duty levied on one hundred sheep on their way from the banks of the Toombudra to Belgaum amounts to more than Rs.23, and besides this tax the sheep graziers pay to the renters of...grass farms, from three to ten rupees for the pasture of every hundred sheep. They pay also in some places Rs.5 on account of Mohturfa so that the sheep tax in the Dooah amounts in general to nearly 30 per cent.."—Letter No. 195 of July 14, 1820

⁸⁰ Letter No. 577 of Sept. 17, 1822

grain coming into the Company's territories from those of the Nizam, or the Jagirdars, so that foreign grain might not have an advantage over the home produce. The custom farmers were given a remission equal in amount⁸¹ to the grain duty realised by them in the previous year.

In the same year (1822) many of the Jagirdars, with the exception of the chiefs of Meritch, Sangli, Ramdoorg and Kittur, were expected to exempt grain from duty. It was of importance that they should, like the Company, take immediate steps, for without that the ryots in the British territory would suffer. It was planned that the duty on grain trade within the Company's possession be immediately removed, but the frontier duty continued to be levied when entering the jagirs. This measure was expected to render the continuance of grain duty so unpopular in the jagirs, that the jagirdars would in time be compelled to abolish it.

A proclamation introducing this reform was issued all over the Southern Maratha Country. It was stated that the "rahadaree" system had created discontent, and it was resolved to follow a new method—(a) A frontier duty was to be levied on grain exported or imported from Mysore, the Nizam, or the Goa territories. (b) A similar attitude was to be adopted toward other States that continued levying grain duty within their jurisdiction. (c) Petty Jagirdars and Inamdaras would have the grain exported and imported from their territory free of duty. (d) To prevent inconvenience to merchants, average rates to be levied and collected were fixed, and (e) grain smuggled was liable to confiscation. These regulations, accompanied by a request to abolish grain duty was despatched to the Jagirdars. "You ought by no means to fancy," wrote Thackeray, "that loss is attendant upon the remissions on grain, but the free unrestricted trade will on the contrary benefit both you and your subjects." More detailed instructions for the collection of duty from the Jagir villages were issued. A special officer was to collect the duty and keep the accounts. The village officers were also instructed to aid the officer in charge. Duty was leviable in a Jagir village both on entrance and exit. A detailed account showing the quantity of grain exported and imported was to be kept, and the grain duty free for the Camp was still to be accompanied by "rahadaries" but an account of their quantity was to be kept.

In 1823, several vexatious duties on articles of trade were removed
 (a) Mills for grinding different kinds of grain; (b) Leaves used as

⁸¹ Letter No. 582 of Sept. 27, 1822

platters; (c) Spice was liable to duty only at particular places; (d) Kurbi, chaff, cotton-seed and fodder of all kinds were taxed only in a few places; (e) Fresh butter; (f) Chunam; (g) Barks used for dying; (h) Charcoal; (i) Earthenware, (j) Wool; (k) Shoes; (l) Particular kind of earth ("soul-mattee") used in washing and bleaching, and (m) Cordage. This gives us a fairly good idea of vexatious collections made by the former Government, and all that it brought to the Treasury was the miserable sum of from Rs 350 to about Rs 500; their abolition, as Thackeray wrote, would be felt as a benefit throughout the country. It was also recommended to abolish duties on implements of trade and industry, but the suggestion had to be dropped, since it would involve the considerable loss of Rs 1,500 per annum.⁸² Over and above these duties commonly levied all over the district, there were several other licences at various talukas "detrimental to the community and injurious to trade". These licences acted as monopolies. To mention some, there was the *good-dulaloo*, or the exclusive privilege of weighing goods at Hangal taluka and collecting a tax on sugar-mills in Padshapur, the monopoly of selling ganja and tobacco at Mookuwee, the privilege of collecting *fusquee* in New Hubli, Padshapur, Badami and Hangal on vegetables, groceries, etc., *avuth goota*, or the exclusive privilege of weighing and measuring grain, gool, tamarind, etc., at 5 pettahs, the monopoly of collecting one quarter rupee on each bundy load of wood at Khanapur, over and above the sair duty, the privilege of collecting a tax on turmeric at the rate of 10 seers per goni at Khanapur: *narel-goota*, or the monopoly of selling cocoanuts at Gudug and *kusat-goota*, or rent by butchers who had monopolised the trade in 5 pettahs. These privileges acted as monopolies and brought, in all, a sum of Rs 3,030 annually, but Thackeray wrote that only a third of this sum would be lost since some of it would continue to be available in the shape of mohturfa.⁸³

As in the Bombay Decean, the European supplies were exempted from duties by the terms of the sair contract. Thackeray was of the opinion, like other Collectors, that the consumption of European manufacture was to be encouraged.⁸⁴ He therefore thought that it would be well to allow European manufactured goods to pass free of duty into the Carnatic. Thus the industries, especially in cloth, in the Karnatak were to suffer the same fate as those of the Bombay Decean.

⁸² Letter No. 692 of May 27, 1823.

⁸³ Letter No. 707 of June 9, 1823

⁸⁴ Letter No. 814 of Nov. 27, 1823

Even in 1826 it appears that no definite settlement regarding the frontier duties between the Jagirdars and the Company had been reached⁸⁵. The question of their commercial transactions, especially in cotton, awaited a decision. It was about 1837 or 1838 that all inland duties that retarded trade were abolished. It cannot be denied that such vexatious duties and exclusive privileges had been extremely detrimental to the progress of inland trade. Their abolition by the new Government was a measure long awaited. The Marathas had little consideration regarding two important aspects of the people's economic prosperity, which was freedom of internal trade and the necessity of good communications for its success.

Opium was not an important article of trade, or even of consumption in the Southern Maratha Country⁸⁶. The trade was confined to a monopoly, and the article was procured from Malwa and Khandesh. The customs were rented and no separate establishment was kept for the collection of duty on it⁸⁷. As in the Bombay Deccan, opium was often smuggled, but Thackeray was of the opinion that since very few classes consumed it, and the quantity smuggled was very small, he had decided to rely on the vigilance of the custom-farmer for its detection⁸⁸. In the statement on the production of opium in the Karnatak, none of the talukas produced any, and the Amildars of Hungund and Andoor talukas wrote that no opium was even consumed in their territory. The quantity imported came via New Hubli and through Havari; and the total quantity received weighed 1 maund and 3½ seers, at a cost of Rs 381-1-0. The principal buyers were the Rajputs and Mussulmans. The talukas where it was consumed most were Dharwar, Pursghur, Patchapur and New Hubli, the total consumption of all the talukas was valued at Rs 1,877-3-0.

The pernicious effect of this drug leading to debauchery, if sold at a cheap price, was pointed out by Thackeray. Opium eating was, he wrote, confined so far to certain classes only, but as the habit was now countenanced by Government officers, and as all classes could indulge in it without danger of exposure, they might soon expect to see a large number of opium eaters if the price should be still further reduced. Only the respectable could so far afford to purchase opium, and "these have strong prejudices against its use," but if it were thought advisable

⁸⁵ Letter No. 1470 of May 6, 1826, Letter No. 1495 of June 7, 1826

⁸⁶ Letter No. 175 of May 5, 1820

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Letter No. 187 of June 25, 1820

to lower the price, then Thackeray referred to the experience of Constantinople and submitted the expediency of erecting an asylum for the lunatics, who might be expected to appear when the effect of the drug began to prevail. He had the courage to state further, that the expenses of the buildings (asylums) would probably be covered by the profits arising from the increased consumption.⁸⁹ This bold statement gives an insight into the character and nobility of Mr. Thackeray.

Mr. Baber, who succeeded Thackeray acknowledged the receipt of regulations for collecting customs on opium and managing the supply of it for home consumption. By 1825, the consumption of opium had increased at Dharwar as it had done in the Bombay Deccan. From his personal inquiries, Baber learnt that there was a more extensive trade in opium than was usually supposed. A great deal of it was imported from Marwad and also from "Ooennabad," "Oomravutty" and other places in the Nizam's territory. Unlike Thackeray, Baber wrote that the plant was also being cultivated at Ramdoorg, Toragull, Nowloor in Dharwar, and in the taluka of Ranibednore.

The principal importers were marwaris settled at Hubli and Haveri who sold it to lingait and Jain shop-keepers. Besides the Rajputs and Mussulmans, there were other consumers such as Arabs, Rohillas, Sikhs, byragis and gosais. The retail price in 1825 was about Rs.3 per pound which was considerably less than the prime cost of what was supplied at Poona. Besides there was considerable proof that what was sold was contraband. Baber was therefore of the opinion like his predecessor that the price and sale of opium ought to be controlled. He promised the Commissioner to look into the regulations sent from the Bombay Deccan, and adopt the same with reference to the local circumstances of his district.⁹⁰ Thus did able and conscientious administrators try their best to control the sale of a drug whose increasing consumption, though profitable to Government, was so highly detrimental to society. With the succeeding years, the consumption continued to grow and the more paying it became the less did Government think of its control.

The term akbarry was specifically applied to the duty on spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs.⁹¹ Under this head were also sometimes included the collections on pepper, betel, and the produce of the arrak

⁸⁹ Letter No 811 of Nov. 9, 1823.

⁹⁰ Letter No 1138 of June 2, 1825.

⁹¹ "Report from the Select Committee, 1832," p. 95.

and toddy taxes.⁹² The duty on spirits was chiefly levied by means of licences to open shops. In some instances, the licence stipulated for a daily payment, while in most of the cases the licence was extended for a year. Besides, the licences were of two kinds, civil and military, and though there were no regulations to prevent one individual from holding both, yet, from the correspondence⁹³ among the official authorities, we learn that they were anxious that the same individual ought not to hold the sole monopoly of liquor for the civil and the military. Two independent individuals would be in opposition and competition, and it would be to the benefit of the Government "that this opposition should be encouraged as much as possible."

Sincere efforts were made to control the spread of the liquor trade. The arrack renters were to abide by definite agreements. No arrack could be taken without a pass; the contractor had to pay the regular monthly instalment, and failure would entail punishment by fine and even confiscation; the arrack could only be sold within the limits given in the contract; the contractor was not to possess more than fifteen shops, no liquor could be sold at the stills; nothing but the best arrack was to be sold at 8 annas a pukka seer, and no gambling, quarrelling, shelter to thieves, acceptance of gold, silver, etc., as payment for the arrack, would be tolerated by Government. No person forbidden by caste to drink was to be given liquor, the breaking of this regulation entailed a fine. Such were the genuine efforts of our first administrators to forestall the evil consequences of drink.

Here, as in the Bombay Deccan, the gravity of this evil was thoroughly grasped by the men at the head of affairs. Thackeray wrote a letter⁹⁴ which displayed his sincere regard and kindly disposition for the people, so common with every one of our early collectors. There is no necessity to reaffirm the abhorrence and contempt that was expressed by all the respectable classes against drink under the late Government, that in itself, wrote Thackeray, was a greater force than any positive laws or prohibitions. The manners of the higher orders had much influence on the habits of the lower, and as drunkenness was regarded as the lowest form of debauchery, a sot would never be tolerated, except in the worst society.⁹⁵ Times had changed and Thackeray could write that the perversion was chiefly "to be ascribed to the effects of our

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Letter No. 445 of Jan. 10, 1822; Letter No. 451 of Jan. 29, 1822.

⁹⁴ Letter No. 755 of Aug. 20, 1823

⁹⁵ Ibid

habits and those of our domestic servants." Even the great and good Sir Munro must have run a considerable expense on wines, liquors, etc., since his bill charged to Government showed the expenditure of Rs.1,344 on that particular item.

High prices would encourage illicit distillation, and Thackeray felt that they must rely on the vigilance of the renter to check that evil. Even if high prices increased the desire to drink, it placed the means of gratification further out of reach. Restrictions like high prices would heighten desires, but it was evident that their practical effect was to lessen the means of enjoyment. The number of shops was to be limited, and a fixed situation for each shop was perhaps the only way to check the abuses.

In 1824 it was found that excesses in drinking continued, and Thackeray proposed to punish offenders by fines and exposure "in the nearest *qusbah* town with bottles suspended from their necks." The amount of the fine collected from the drunkard was to go to such persons who gave information against him. "Experience has convinced me," wrote Thackeray, "that no measure less severe will suffice to remedy the evil in question."

Salt was another commodity of profit to the Company. As early as 1821, Thackeray wrote, "we should be particularly cautious in taxing it, for if we make it too dear we shall place sea-salt beyond the reach of our ryots and put them upon the mud salt of the country, which is only fit for cattle and beggars."⁹⁶

Though incorrect as far as the data⁹⁷ goes, a fairly decent idea can be gathered of the salt trade in the Carnatic on British occupation. The population was 6,59,822 souls, and it was supposed that each person on an average consumed daily a quantity of salt weighing about one quarter rupee which gave the yearly consumption of 745½ Madras grace. The sair accounts showed that 883¼ grace were yearly brought into the district, but as 487½ grace were again exported to the neigh-

⁹⁶ Letter No. 383 of July 25, 1821.

⁹⁷ "With respect to the materials from which this information is prepared, I must remark that they are by no means satisfactory, and that it would be unsafe to found upon them any new measure which would affect the salt trade. I have necessarily procured most of my information from the talukas, and the statement of consumption shews discrepancies which are too great to be explained. Thus the population of Dharwar taluk is less than that of Purusgurh, yet the statement makes it appear that nearly four times as much salt is consumed in the former as in the latter. Dharwar is certainly the greater thoroughfare, but this circumstance cannot account for so wide a difference."—(Thackeray, Letter No. 383.)

bouring territories, only $395\frac{1}{2}$ grace remained for home consumption. The estimate, however, appeared to show that the district consumed 350 grace more than it received. The difference was accounted for, as 175 grace were smuggled in by lombadies, 87 grace were brought in by return trade, which if light were duty free; 10 or 15 grace of earth salt were consumed by those who could afford no better; and the remaining 73 or 78 grace were purchased in retail at various fairs and bazars in the Jagirs. About 150 grace of salt were brought into the district direct from the coast of Goa; from Malwan, Rajapur, and other ports north of Goa came 307 grace; from Kumpa and Unkolee in the Canara, $34\frac{1}{2}$ grace. The remaining $35\frac{1}{2}$ grace came from the neighbouring foreign districts.

The average price of salt in the last twenty years was a rupee for 22 seers in the Carnatic. In the Carnatic in spite of some of the talukas being at a great distance from the sea, the prices were lower than in Sholapur, due to their lying on the route of the lombadies, who chiefly supplied salt for inland consumption. According to a statement⁹⁸ showing the consumption of salt in a family consisting of father, mother, two grown-up children of 16 and 14, and two of 4 and 2 years of age, the daily quantity consumed was about $1\frac{3}{4}$ rupee, and in the case of a poor family anywhere between $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupee. To a family of moderate means $3\frac{1}{4}$ seers of salt would last for a month, it being calculated that a seer of salt was enough for 30 seers of grain.

Even a sum of Rs.100 was hardly sufficient to include the specimens of the many coins in circulation in the Southern Maratha Country.⁹⁹ To mention a few of the gold coins, they had the *Buhadree* pagodas, *Soolakhee* sicka, *Shahpooree* rupee, *Belapaooree* rupee, *Mirjee Hoockree* rupee, *Sembhoo Peerkhane* and the *Bin Chandoree* rupee.¹⁰⁰ These were but a few drops in the ocean of coins that flooded the country. The coins mostly in circulation were the *Chinchoree* or *Ankosee*¹⁰¹ and even the coins denominated as *Chandoree* were really only different sorts of the *Ankosee*.

The actual difficulty here, as in Maharastra, was in fixing the value of these various coins at the time of payment or exchange. A market that had coins of such various denominations and values was a veritable

⁹⁸ See the Record Book

⁹⁹ Letter No. 220 of Sept 20, 1820

¹⁰⁰ Letter No. 231 of Jan 31, 1821

¹⁰¹ Letter No. 244 of Nov. 8, 1820

paradise for the practice of fraud and deception. The sawkars and suraiffs made the most of these circumstances. Even the Company at times became a victim, and constant anxiety was shown by the authorities to assay these various coins and fix their value in terms of the Company's rupee. We have, for instance, on record that 2 lacs of chinchorree rupees at 14 annas 9 pies were equal to the Company's 1,84,375 rupees.¹⁰²

The Company, by its position, could find some protection in such a monetary world, but the public were the constant victims of the sawkars' fraudulent practices. Efforts were made to protect especially the ryots and the troops; but as Thackeray wrote, it was easy to point out the evil, but extremely difficult to remove, and it was superfluous to show the different ways in which the variety of the currency enabled the suraiffs to take advantage of the rest of the community.¹⁰³ Even if each kind of rupee that was current in the Carnatic were of equal value in every part of the district, the variety of coins and the difference in their quality would still continue to afford the sawkars a wide field for speculation. But to make matters worse, the rupee at any particular mint exchange was par only within a certain range, and if taken to a distance where it was not the coin of account, its value immediately fell. The only effectual remedy would be the abolition of the numerous mints and the substitution of one general currency, suggested Mr. Thackeray. Such a measure was already adopted in the southern districts of the Madras territory. But, as Thackeray pointed out, since the Carnatic differed widely in circumstances from the southern districts in Madras "the same measure would produce very different effects in the two countries."

The distance from the Presidency and the want of commercial intercourse with it always prevented its currency from reaching the Karnatak in the natural course of trade. The merchant, for instance, coming from Goa with bullion and foreign coin to buy cloth would find no medium of exchange if the Shahpur mint were closed, and would be obliged to part with his bullion at an unfavourable rate or turn home again. "This is one of the many arguments," wrote Thackeray, "that can be adduced to prove the danger of meddling with the mints which are intimately connected with the trade of the Carnatic and its commercial prosperity."

¹⁰² Letter No 164 of March 20, 181

¹⁰³ Letter No 230 of Oct 7, 1820.

Thackeray suggested that the only safe method of reforming the currency would be to establish in the centre of the district a new mint for the Company's rupee. The two other mints of Shahpur and Bagrikotta might then be closed. It could be expected that the superiority and general currency of the new coinage would soon enable it to absorb the old. Even this proposal was faced with a difficulty. The Carnatic was, as we know, surrounded by foreign states who would continue to coin their money which would find its way into the Company's territory, so that it could be hardly expected that the Company's rupee would continue to maintain its superiority in the bazar. Thus a merchant taking money into the Nizam's territory would find a better market for the Hyderabad than for the Dharwar rupee, the former having been almost absorbed by the new mint would probably be the scarcer of the two at Dharwar, so that the merchant would lose rather than gain by the reform in the system of coinage.

The greatest objection to any innovation came from the commercial classes, particularly the sawkars. These people kept their accounts in the old local currency. As stock-jobbers, they derived great profits from the confusion of coins, wrote Thackeray, and thrive "like leeches by a corrupt state of the circulating medium," which enabled them "to bleed the rest of the community in proportion to their superior cunning." Such a class, of course, deserved no consideration, but it could not be forgotten that the trade of the country was chiefly "in their hands" and their welfare was connected with the prosperity of the trade.

Faced with these obstacles, the evil was immediately met by a reduction of the rates at which the inferior coins were received and exchanged at the Company's treasury. For this purpose Thackeray submitted lists of various current coins in circulation at Dharwar, assayed both in Bombay and Madras, giving their former, present, and proposed rates. To take for example the *Solakee* sicka, it was assayed in Madras at 14 annas 6 pies, its former value was 14 as. 9 pies. Its value in circulation then (1820) was 14 as. 8 pies, its proposed rate to be 14 annas only. Of the gold coins the *New Ikere* pagoda was most in circulation in Ranibednore, Hangal, Adore and Kagenelly. It was much in request with the traders who purchased with it spices, beetlenuts, etc. The former treasury rate of this pagoda was Rs.3 as.14, then in circulation it was valued at Rs 3 as.12 ps.8, its proposed rate was to be Rs.3 as.4 ps.3. Remarks were made against each of the coins in the lists, explaining the reasons for altering their rates of exchange.

It was proposed that the Company should avoid fixing too high a rate for a foreign coin which was not brought into the district by the

natural course of trade. Few of the many coins then in Dharwar had any business there. Suraffs and sawkars dealt in coins as merchants did in goods, buying them where they were cheap and selling them where they were dear, so that care had to be taken that more value was not assigned to these foreign coins than their actual worth.¹⁰⁴ In spite of these efforts, little confidence could be placed in the altered rates of exchange. All that could be done was (a) to give more for the good coin and less for the bad, as that would keep the inferior coin out of the treasury, and attract the superior one, and (b) by limiting the variety of the currency, tend to lessen the influence of the sawkar and suraff.

The ryot had to pay his revenue instalments in the Company's rupees which compelled him to exchange the coins "which happen to be in his pockets." This had given the opportunity to the sawkar to defraud the ryot in the exchange. To prevent this, it was inserted in every ryot's Koolwar puttah the amount of his kist in the local coin of the district, as well as the Company's rupees.

Next to the variety of the coins, the fluctuations in the value of commodities seemed to account for the apparent changes in the value of money. The innovation of making the Madras rupee the measure of value in the Carnatic which lay beyond the natural range of that coin also accounted for some of the apparent anomalies in the rate of the currency. The Madras rupee seldom reached the Carnatic. It had only begun to enter the district when the Company began to pay the troops in that coin. Since then it had been made the coin of all accounts, and as its character was high, it was not surprising that it came into great demand. It soon became the coin in which all kists and revenue engagements were calculated.

Several suggestions were immediately put into motion with the result that within one year the Collector could write that fewer complaints were made by the troops and better coins came into the treasury.¹⁰⁵ But so long as the variety of coins continued in circulation, in these early years, even the Company at times fell a victim in their exchange to the sawkars.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Letter No. 230 of Oct. 7, 1820.

¹⁰⁵ Letter No. 336 of May 22, 1821.

¹⁰⁶ Accompanying Letter No. 1168 of July 19, 1825, from Mr. Baber to the Commissioner, we learn that Mr. Stevenson had procured a Hoondi from one Soucar Ramechandra Shett of Rs50,000. Firstly, we learn of the different coins in which the Hoondi was paid, and their value in Company's rupees.

Coins	Coins Paid	Value in Company's Rupees
1. Dharwar Pagodas	520	1,885.0. 0
2. Shahpooree Rupees	1,121	980 3 50

The two most important mints in the Carnatic on British occupation were those of Shahpur and Bagulkote. In 1821 the Shahpur rupee was to be coined at Belgaum and the Collector drew the attention of the Commissioner that such an innovation would mean inconvenience to merchants bringing their bullion from Shahpur and Kittur. Besides, the managers of the Shahpur mint had been far more respectable than those of any other mint in the Carnatic. The Shahpur coin had been so far the best silver rupee in the district. Anyway the Collector hoped that the new rules, worked with vigilance, would prevent any abuses in the new mint at Belgaum. Besides, he was of the opinion that the Shahpur and Bagulkote rupees would continue in circulation till a superior coin could take their place in the markets of the Carnatic.¹⁰⁷

It was also proposed to re-establish a mint at Dharwar, since it was a place of much trade, and was already once the seat of an ancient mint. The coin originally struck there was the Dharwar pagoda, but it was suggested that the Bahaduree pagoda struck in the days of Tipu should be struck again if the mint were set to work again in Dharwar. As a circulating medium it was in many parts of the district more acceptable than any other coin. Much of the gold that supplied the parent mint for this coin in Mysore was carried from Goa through the Carnatic, and if there were a mint at Dharwar, a new channel of commerce would be opened between the Carnatic and the coast. The Company would, of course, have to decide between a gold or silver coin, though it was proposed that a gold currency would be much more portable.

The very first step which was contemplated to establish a standard currency and destroy the variety of coins, especially the foreign, was to

3	Belpooree Rupees	1,747 7½	14,369 1 75
4	Soolakee Unkosee Rupees	50	43 3 0
5	Natam Pett	831	667 0 80
6	Halt Star Pagodas	412	721 0 0
7	Quarter Star Pagodas	1,506	1,317 3 0
8	Soolakee Siaca	21,755	19,035 2 50
9	Iyen Siaca	324	29 0 59
10	Company Siaca	5,022	5,022 0 0
11	Soolakee Poolcherry	133	126 2 73
12	Smut Poolcherry	20½	19 2 10
13	Valgannu Siaca	334	287 0 96
14	Poolakee Company	87	82 3 47
15	Footkee Unkosee Rupees	2,184	1,911 0 0
16	Suhe Price	10,502 1½	3,500 0 60
	Total		50,000 0 0

It appears from later correspondence that the Soucar had reaped a great profit from this exchange. Letters are found from different business men showing the profits reaped when opinions were invited by the Collector.

¹⁰⁷ Letter No. 336 of May 14, 1821

accept those coins into the treasury, but to consider them as bullion to be sent to the mint and not returned for circulation among the public. The only difficulty to be guarded against was to prevent the suraifs from monopolizing the better kinds of coins; but since they lived by circulating and not by hoarding money, this difficulty would be precluded. It was, besides, declared that the Company would only receive in future as revenue the following coins: the Madras pagoda and rupee, the *Bahaduree* or *Ikeree* and Dharwar pagoda, the *Sarth* or Bombay rupee, the Sicca or Bagulkote and the Belgaum (formerly Shahpur) rupees. Thus were the foundations laid to do away with the ocean of coins, by a choice selection of the superior ones, and eventually to establish a single standard medium of exchange of a fixed value minted by the Government, with the mint under the sole authority of the state.

We have thus reviewed the Carnatic on the advent of the British. The Carnatic, as the Bombay Deccan, was faced with difficulties of a similar nature. Administrators at both the ends of the Maratha dominions had the same obstacles to surmount and common problems to solve. The conditions, from the economic point of view, at the end of the first twenty or twenty-five years of British rule bear a close resemblance to one another both in the Karnatak as in the Bombay Deccan.

CHAPTER III

THE PEOPLE—PART I

THE population was of a very mixed description. The most numerous class was the Jungum, next, and almost equaling it, was the common Maratha, the Brahmins, beruds, Mussulmans, a few Jains, hunbur, and dhungur or shepherds. They followed a number of ordinary professions like those of blacksmiths, carpenters, coppersmiths, goldsmiths, oilmen, potters and musicians.

The Jungum, usually known by the title of Lingait, was the chief cultivating and labouring class. In their civil character they were a plain and useful set of people, naturally laborious and of good adaptability toward any profession, they were not restricted to one sort of labour but were found as weavers, coppersmiths, shopkeepers and in several other occupations. The Marathas were mainly agriculturists, active and laborious. The Brahmins were only found in large and comfortable villages. The beruds formed a perfectly distinct class of community corresponding to the Bheels of Guzerat, but identical neither in caste nor habit. They were simple in their manners, civil and good humoured in their deportment, and communicative in their discourse¹. There were a sprinkling of Mussulmans everywhere, and at certain places in the capacity of Daisias appointed in the heyday of the Bijapur rule. The Jains were in a very limited number and belonged to the mercantile class of the bamas and sawkars. They carried on a small traffic in the surrounding districts of exchanging superfluous commodities. "They were a very timid set of men." The weavers were either lingaits, or another Kanarese tribe called hutgur which was entirely devoted to the loom. They manufactured dhoties or coarse coloured saris. The hunbar was a trader and breeder of cattle, and if his stock contained a few cows and buffaloes he sold butter and milk. Of a similar character were the dhungur or shepherds. A few Christians had found their way up from Goa, and established themselves in the road villages as distillers and vendors of spirits, professions which neither the Maratha nor Mussulman would engage in publicly. They were at times agriculturists but were a very poor and sunken race.

Of the character of the people Chaplin had an extremely favourable opinion. If not in the larger towns, he was definite that in the country

¹ Statistical Report, 1822, Marshall, p. 16.

the morals of the ryot were of a high standard². Individuals at times in his estimation were deserving of the highest confidence, and though the revenue servants on the low scale of pay were corrupt and intriguing, those with prospects of promotion were generally straightforward and honest. Of his domestic servants, Chaplin said that he could hardly recollect an instance of dishonesty. On the contrary, he often left his desk open with money or other articles in it in the utmost confidence that nothing would be abstracted.³ The character of these honest people soon began to deteriorate, especially the bedurs, who began to commit the greatest number of offences just a year after Chaplin left. Thackeray wrote⁴ that most of the castes had taken to robbery due to unemployment; under the late Government and their sirdars the bedurs had supplied the retainers. Besides unemployment and bad police organization, "the increase in prevalence of drinking spirits" had probably tended to boldness of spirit and thieving.

Slavery was tolerated in the Southern Maratha Country, but it was not the slavery with which the British were familiar.⁵ In 1825, Baber

² Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee 1831, p. 822

³ Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee, p. 822

"543. Upon the whole the Committee are to understand that the more you have seen of the natives the better your opinion of them.—I have always formed a good opinion of the native character generally, I think they will bear an advantageous comparison with the natives of any country in the world" (Chaplin)

⁴ Letter No. 556 of July, 1822

"54564. You cannot state to the Committee to what extent slavery is employed for agriculture purposes?—Compared with the whole of India, to a very limited extent indeed, and although it goes under the general name of slavery, it is a very modified form of servitude and does not deserve to be called slavery—slavery is an improper term for it altogether, it is villainage

"54565. Is the labour compulsory?—It is compulsory to the extent that the man cannot leave his district and he must give a certain amount of produce to his master

"54566. What are the means for compelling labour?—The labourers never think of resisting, they have gone on from generation to generation

"54567. What means are taken to prevent them leaving the property to which they are attached?—They never think of leaving it.

"54569. Is there any arbitrary or summary power in the hands of the master?—None whatever

"54570. Are they transferable?—They are transferable with the soil, I suppose, but only with the soil

"54571. They are sold with the estates?—Yes, when they are sold, but that is a very rare thing

"54578. Have these villains any rights they can enforce, as against the owner of the land?—I should say they have.

"54579. What is the nature of those rights?—I should say they have a right to the occupancy of the soil which they and their ancestors have always occupied paying the usual rents." Evidence Before the Select Committee, C. E. Freylyn Vol. VI Aug. 16, 1832

had gathered from his sub-collectors and mamludars sufficient information on slavery in the Karnatak. It appeared that the sale of children as slaves, and kidnapping were exceedingly rare occurrences in the Collectorate, and that although there were a few persons held in a state of bondage, they could be considered more as domestic servants than as absolute slaves. These could be formed into three classes: (a) those who were deprived of their personal freedom as a penalty for crimes; (b) those who were born in their master's house, or purchased of their parents in times of famine, and (c) those who subjected themselves to voluntary slavery for life, or a limited period, in liquidation of debts.⁶ There were no definite numbers of these several classes of slaves, but Baber surmised that there were a few hundreds in the Company's territories. Thackeray considered this system of slavery to be so mild that he was for toleration of its practice rather than its restriction.⁷ Baber himself wrote that since the Hindu and Muslim law recognised domestic slavery, and as they were always anxious to leave the customs of their native subjects inviolate, he did not see the necessity of interference so long as the slave was treated with humanity. The only restriction in their Regulation I of 1812 ought to be the denunciation of the sale of children into slavery for life by their parents. The reports of the mamludars from several talukas all showed the mildness of the masters toward the slaves. As regards the kidnapping of the children, they all suspected the lambanis or bunjaries. As a nomadic people they constantly got the opportunity of moving from place to place, and were thus able to lift cattle and children when opportunity came their way. The mamludars suggested that the caravans of lambanis were to be given a "rahdaree" at every frontier of a taluka, stating the number of their belongings when they arrived and when they departed, a close examination of these "rahdarees" would prevent all liftings in the future.

⁶ Letter No. 1266 of Sept. 8, 1825.

"The slaves that are now to be found were either born in their master's house or bought in their childhood some few are persons who being unable to pay fines, have been sold as slaves. They are all generally treated with great kindness by their owners and in fact considered as belonging to the household, they are allowed to marry amongst each other and the expenses of the ceremony are defrayed by the master."

"A master is at liberty to sell his slave, but it is a circumstance that hardly ever takes place, if disputes or other causes render it desirable he is allowed to live separately, the produce of the slave's labour belongs to his master, who allows him sufficient for his maintenance."

"The power of punishment rests with the master but it is not to be exerted to a greater extent, than would be used toward one of his own family. These are the leading features of the state of slavery." Stevenson, Letter of July 29, 1825, and Letter No. 1266 of Sept. 8, 1825.

⁷ Letter No. 1266 of Sept. 8, 1825.

The institution of slavery was of immense service in times of famine, and its total abolition, observed Stevenson the sub-collector, would mean interference with private property and aggravating distress in times of scarcity, by preventing the destitute from saving their children by giving them to those who would buy and keep them. Thackeray had also put forth the same argument against its total abolition, unless Government undertook to provide a fund for starving children.

The great number of fallen houses gave to the villages in 1822 an appearance of ruin and discomfort. The greater number of them were built of shapeless stones fitted on each other with little art, and held together by nothing better than mud; the roofs were flat and mud-tarred, which were anything but ornamental, and were constant sources of dust in the parching heat of our Indian summers. The town of Belgaum was typical of large towns, wrote Marshall, in which people lived according to their respective stations in life. The better houses, though not stately or handsome buildings, were uniform, substantial, and sufficiently roomy; whilst those of the lower classes, with the exception of the very poor, were of a very respectable style of cottage.⁸

We may now consider the wages in some of the talukas. The wage for labour in Padshapur was about one eighth of a rupee for an able-bodied man, and one half or sometimes three quarters of that for a woman. Unmarried men in constant employment received one seer of jawari daily. The wages of the carpenters and bricklayers were a quarter of a rupee per diem, which was quite high in comparison with other classes of workers. Weavers could not reckon on earning more than $2\frac{1}{2}$, or at most 3 annas per day. During the harvest, wages rose beyond all moderate proportion. In Belgaum the rate for an ordinary, unskilled labourer was about one sixth of a rupee for a male, and half a rupee for a woman, but if professional skill was added to the labour the hire was at least double, and master-masons, carpenters, or even tailors expected half a rupee per diem. These were considered as rates of a thriving community, and some of them had been kept up by the wants of the military. Two annas was the highest sum given for a day's labour at any season of the year to able-bodied men at Chandgurh (Bedi). With the price of natchni, or ragi, at 20 seers the rupee, a decently fed family in Chandgurh ought to have, wrote Marshall, 3 seers a day, which would come to Rs.4 per month, a sum which seemed to exceed the possible earnings of a great part of the poor families of

⁸ Report of June 25, 1820.

the taluka.⁹ In Khanpur, all agricultural labour was paid in grain (ragi) at the rate of 1½ to 2 seers. If the crops were good, 3 seers were often given. Even the blacksmith and carpenter were paid in corn by the cultivator at harvest time. These indigenous systems continued for some time even after the advent of the British.

In 1825, the average population and houses in the important towns of the Southern Maratha Country were as follows:¹⁰

Names of Towns	Houses	Average Population
Dharwar	3,808	13,858
Amindavy	376	1,731
Gurruq	604	3,203
Nerrendra	405	1,672
Tudeode	500	2,110
Mardagy	118	660
Nowloot	203	938

RHONE

Bellor	300	1,250
Hubergeera	250	900
Rhone	400	1,800
Soody	200	800
Sawagull	250	1,050

BADAMY

Badami	550	3,000
Moordakavy	480	2,500
Keroor	700	3,200
Kulladghee	250	1,150
Purwatty	550	3,300

BAGULCOTE

Bagulcote	1,500	8,000
Beelgee	300	1,200
Seeroor	700	2,500

HOONGOOND

Anantpoor	600	2,500
Amengheed	500	1,800
Kometfugy	500	1,800
Hoongoond	400	1,600

PADSHAPOOR

Belgaum	1,500	10,000
Exclusive of the troops and their followers who may be estimated at 2,000 more.		
Padshapor	500	2,000
Khanapoor	1,000	3,200

PURRUSGURH

Suwvadhlutty	800	3,000
Bettigeeiy	500	2,000

KITTOOR

Kittoor	1,200	4,900
Hanguil	1,050	1,300
Bellavuddy	600	2,500
Sangolee	450	2,200

SUMPGAM

Sumpgam		1,700
Mokatkhan Hubli		2,100
Bagavady		500
Nesurghee		1,300
Deshnoor		2,000

BEDEE

Nundgheer	1,000	3,500
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RANEBEDNOOR

Six principal towns	2,650	13,000
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GOOTULL

Fifteen principal towns	4,050	18,850
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KOAD

Six principal towns		5,500
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HANGULL

Six principal towns	1,997	7,800
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BANKAPUR

Five principal towns	1,360	6,600
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In 1827-28 the total population of the Carnatic was 8,38,757, and the average number of inhabitants to a square mile, 91.94. The land revenue for the year was Rs 19,45,323, the tillage area 26,49,598, and the total revenue including saer, and taxes on shops and trades came to Rs 24,21,516¹¹. If we consider the wealth of the people in some of the principal towns in Dharwar taluka only about twenty of the inhabitants possessed a capital of from Rs 5,000 to Rs 50,000, and only two were worth a lac. In the majority of the towns there was no one possessing above Rs.2,000.¹² In New Hubli and its suburbs there were five persons worth Rs 50,000 to a lac, and thirty people with Rs.10,000 to Rs 50,000. Ten per cent in Badami could be calculated as families of substance holding from Rs.100 to Rs.1,000. Only at the town of Purwatty there were ten merchants worth Rs.5,000 to Rs.20,000. In Belgamm about 6 per cent were merchants possessing Rs.1,000 to Rs 5,000, and 30 per cent were in moderate circumstances chiefly as weavers. In Sumpgaon there was only one merchant with a capital of Rs 50,000. The general expenditure, therefore, of a Brahmin in such a society was calculated at Rs 36 per month, of a Mussulman at Rs 31, of a cultivator at Rs 15, and a lingait about Rs.24. Thus wealth was, as usual, unevenly distributed, and opulence was the monopoly of a few.

The very first effort to qualify young men for public service in the Carnatic was made by Mr Thackeray through a Proclamation in 1823.¹³ His proposal was to maintain as many students as there were talukas, and to instruct them by means of a course of lectures given daily by the revenue officers. The pundits were to give weekly lectures on Hindu

¹¹ Letter to the Honourable Court of Nov. 27, 1828.

¹² Letter No. 1267 of Oct. 1, 1825.

¹³ Letter No. 736 of July 5, 1823.

law and literature, the mufti on Muslim law and literature, while the sheristadars one lecture each on accounts and other revenue subjects. The progress of the students was to be ascertained by means of quarterly examinations at which the best student would be selected for the first vacant post. To each of those students Thackeray proposed a sum of Rs.5 monthly "for his subsistence."

The total number of schools in the three talukas reported upon in 1824 were 34, with a total of 531 students, and of the 34 teachers 27 were lingaits.¹⁴ Some of these schools were nominal, and superintended by old men who could hardly read or write. But it was calculated that 27 more schools could be opened with advantage, and that at the expiration of a year 523 new pupils would attend them.

The teachers were remunerated by monthly stipends. The average salary was about a quarter of a rupee per month for each student. Besides that, the school-master received on certain feast days a present of a piece of cloth, or some other trifle (according to the circumstances of the family) from each of his pupils. He was always entitled to take his meal at any of their houses, and at the commencement of each new year of study, it was customary to make a small present to the master. This description of the master's life shows us that he was, in the Hindu social scheme, somewhat like a charity school-boy; so that he would nine times out of ten either neglect his work altogether, or perform it in a very slovenly manner.

Stevenson, writing to Thackeray in 1823, proposed a fixed salary, and recommended three classes of school-masters who were to receive their salary according to their qualifications and the number of students. The salary was from Rs 10 to Rs 14 per month. The attention of the teacher was to be secured by periodical reports forwarded by native officers. The plan was good, but where was the money to come from?

It cannot be denied that then as now education was a neglected duty by the parent and the Government in the villages. Stevenson observed, as far back as 1824, that it was certainly not disinclination on the part of the ryot to educate his child, but poverty was the great drawback; a ryot had not only to pay the school-master, but to lose the labour of his child which was so very valuable to him. A child of 6 years tended the cattle, and soon after was able to assist his father on

¹⁴ Letter of Aug. 2, 1824.

the farm. If the child was sent to a school, the parent would have to hire labour at from 2 to 3 pagodas per annum, besides the labourer's food and lodging. "To do all in his power to render more comfortable, happy, and independent the condition of his subjects but more particularly of its most valuable class, the ryot must ever be the chief object of the Government I conceive, therefore, that every inducement should be held out to induce them to educate their children."

Stevenson's proposals were that the ryot be compensated by the Government during the time his child was at school; education to the agricultural classes be made popular by cheap rates; the distribution of small rewards at the yearly examination be awarded, and that only the needy be allowed free education. He did not anticipate any difficulty in getting a sufficient number of capable teachers to perform the duties. In founding new Government schools they were to be careful that the older institutions did not suffer. Finally, besides the "Jayamony," "Peinchpkaina" and "Vedoorn Nitta" as the text-books, a few works containing short essays and easy and entertaining moral tales were to be prescribed.

In 1825, we learn that in the entire Carnatic there were altogether 270 schools, 291 tutors and 3,815 students.¹⁵ Instruction was given in "dowlaecharum," (writing in sand on the ground or on boards) reading and simple arithmetic; besides this, the reading of "Jayamony," "Amakosh," "Vedoorn Nitta" and Persian books such as "Kareema" was also done. The school fees varied from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 anna per month for each boy, and the income of the tutors from 6 rupees in the Principal Division of the Collectorate to 4 annas in the sub-collectorate. The total population, as given by Baber, was 6 lacs,¹⁶ and the proportion of the educated to the uneducated appeared as one to every one hundred and fifty-four, and even the educated half were not advanced beyond the elements of reading. The reading of the "Jayamony" writing, or casting accounts, was known and taught only to the Brahmins and lingais, the remainder who were the labouring classes, did not have education of any type. "It is clear therefore," observed Baber, "that

¹⁵ Letter No. 1203 of Aug. 22, 1825

"Of the schools 146 were Mahratta, 112 Canarese,—7, both Mahratta and Canarese, and 5 were in Persian and Hindustani. Of the tutors 138 were Brahmins, 139 Linguis, 5 Hindoos of different castes, and 9 Mussalmans. Of the pupils 943 were Brahmins, 2,092 Linguis, 609 Hindoos of different castes and 118 Mussalmans." (Baber)

¹⁶ Brahmins 3,200; Rajputs 5,000, Ujshes 1,500; Mahrattas 42,000; Jains 8,000; Puncheets 20,000; Mussalmans 43,000; Linguis 1,25,000 and Shudras 2,40,000

education was at the lowest ebb in this Collectorate, and since there can be no question as to the policy of diffusing knowledge among the people, it behoves us to do our endeavour to organize a plan of education."

Mr. Baber promised Government 1,700 additional students if they would undertake the expense of maintaining more teachers who could be paid for every 25 boys about Rs.7 per month. In the sub-collectorate, 70 new schools were proposed, and 400 students were expected to be added to the existing number. A reference was made by Baber to the former suggestion of Stevenson that the ryot be paid a compensation during his child's education, but he observed that it would be impolitic to relieve the parent wholly from an educational expense. He was in favour of a school where gratuitous education would be given only to poor children.

The allowance of the teachers in the schools for gratuitous education was to be granted by Government according to the rate of 6 annas per month for each pupil certified by the Patel, as well as the parent to have been in daily attendance at the school in their respective villages. The number of poor students was not to exceed 5 per cent of the number of youths from the age of 7 to 14 in each village, it being understood that the tutor was at liberty to take in as many more students whose parents could pay for their education. Brave schemes, but, as in 1823, how were the expenses to be met? Baber wrote: "I cannot discover that there are any available Government funds from which the sum necessary to defray the education of the poor could be raised." All that could be done was to patronise the then existing schools in the villages and "confidently hope for . . . occasional contributions from the opulent and respectable portion of the community."

Twenty-five years after that letter from Baber, the life of the student and teacher remained unchanged. Young wrote in 1853: "It appears that the teachers of these schools have no fixed salary, but are invited every day to dine at the house of one or other of the scholars. The days of the new and full moon are holidays, and the pupils writing-boards are washed on the day previous, or once in fifteen days after the first half of the day's study. When the children return from dinner at about 2 o'clock, and the boards having been cleaned and worshipped, each pupil lays on it a pice as an offering to the teacher, or if too poor for that, he presents a quantity (generally about half a seer) of rice, or whatever grain there may be in his house, and in this manner, and a separate agreement of a fee, never I believe exceeding four annas a month, with any of the fathers or guardians who may be able or will-

ing to pay it, the teacher gets on as he can."¹⁷ And we may add so did the education of the villagers.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURE—PART II

WEEKLY markets were the resort of the people for buying and selling. Every taluka possessed some principal centres of trade. The several kinds of grain, legumes, garden produce, and commodities like butter, thread and a few of the commonest cloths, constituted the normal sale. Each dealer brought in just as much of the article as he wished to dispose of; every one who bought a commodity exchanged it for another, and cash was seldom the medium of transfer. The business, observed Marshall, was conducted with perfect order. The exchange, though rendered difficult by the number of coins, never created confusion.¹⁸ In those days there were certain taxes on the commodities coming into the bazar. Each bullock load of grains, paid to the sirkar half a seer and to the Patel and Coolcurnee a quarter of a seer. Besides the shop-keepers paid a tax in the shape of ground-rent, but it was not heavy and they were as well off as the rest of the community. Most of these markets had two Government officers, the "Putun Shetee" and the "Aotee." The former was an hereditary officer with a landed endowment, whose duty was to preserve order, to settle disputes, punish fraud, and to be a witness to important contracts. For these duties he had a handful ("Phuskee") from every basket of grain and a trifling toll in kind from other articles; on the advent of the British he seldom received anything but his fee. The "Aotee" watched over-weights and measures, when any trader wanted a new seer, he applied to the "Aotee," who got it made by the Zeengar (saddler). He too had a similar payment as the "Putun Shetee."¹⁹

The endeavours to ascertain the income from trade between Dharwar and the surrounding country, a few years after the advent of the British in the Carnatic, was a matter of difficulty due to the irregular system of collecting duties. It was impossible to obtain any data by which even a probable estimate could be formed. No account was kept of the quantity and value of imports.²⁰ Judging from the casual conversation of merchants, the Collector observed that the income from trade carried on between Dharwar and the Madras territories was not

¹⁷ Report of March 9, 1853.

¹⁸ Report of May 20, 1820.

¹⁹ Statistical Report, Marshall, 1822, p. 145.

²⁰ Letter No. 1206 of Aug. 26, 1825.

less than three to four lacs of rupees per annum. Barter was the main basis of trade, and agricultural produce passed as a medium of exchange for iron, copper, cloth, and other inferior articles of daily necessity or household importance. Money played a minor part, except in some instances. If a taluka like Padshapur had only agricultural articles for exchange, and if these were not in demand in its adjoining market, it would dispose of them in the Concan for their money value and then buy copper, cloth, iron, or such other articles with the money.²¹

If we take Belgaum of 1822 as an important centre of trade, we might gather some idea of the activity in its busy market. From Goa it imported salt, the spices of Malabar, cocoanuts, kopra, betelnut, dollars, and venetian sequins. From Rajapur in the Concan, nearly the same articles. From Bombay via Malwan, silk, cochineal, a few drugs and Oriental species. From Malwan wheat and ghee. Inland from Nagpur, cloths of various kinds. From Naranpet, the better sort of saris. From Kurnool and Kurpa, a cloth (*jhot*) of which the finer kind of "Ungreecas" were made. From Bellary dhotis and joree, a superior cloth. From Kittur and Hubli hurburee, oil-seeds and cotton. From Gokak and other eastern towns jawari and other grains. The articles of export were rice principally to Goa, some to Gokak and Nuwulgund, and some cloth to Wari, Malwan, Rajapur, Meritch and Poona.

The Kanarese talukas of Badami and Bagulkote were the largest manufacturing centres before the advent of the British. In those talukas worked about 2,000 looms for weaving cotton cloths, some of which had a slight admixture of silk.²² These looms were principally found at the towns of Keroor, Purwurtee, Bagulkote, Saroor, Kumudgee, Moodkovee, Jalihal and Badami. The cloths which were chiefly woven were saris, chooles, dhotur, selee and purgis. The articles used for dying were cochineal imported from Bombay, and safflower from Kupeela and Nagpur.

Even a few years before the British rule, livelihood for the manufacturer had become a difficulty. When cloth was woven by hire, half a rupee was the wage; if the weaver working by contract gained more than this, he called it profit, if less, he considered the weaving a loss, and this loss constantly happened as early as 1818. Besides, the price of thread nearly doubled owing to general badness of the cotton crop.

²¹ Statistical Report, 1822. Marshall, p. 22.

²² Report of July 21, 1821.

Only five years previous to these conditions the price of thread was half of what it was in 1818, while the value of cloth was the same. The condition of the weavers had been very comfortable, and they had even accumulated some property. But within the last few years powerful causes, observed Marshall, reduced their gains and enhanced the price of grains. The grains commonly eaten were jawari and ragi. The former was what the weaver fed his family with, but it sold at 13 seers per rupee by 1820. A seer in Marshall's estimation was a moderate meal for three people; the families for instance of the Belgaum artisan averaged six members, and decent living required two meals daily, for which one had to allow about 3 seers. This brought the annual consumption to 1,095 seers, which in 1820 cost Rs.84. Supposing the working days of a Hindu weaver, wrote Marshall, were 280 in a year, and with the deduction of 85 for festivals, the earnings of the average family would be Rs.105, and that would leave Rs.11 only for the indispensable items of cloth, fuel, spices, tobacco, cooking utensils and house repairs. "The loogra weaver cannot then feed his family constantly on jawari, but must often be content with ragi, the price of which is nearly one-third less. It will be seen that other weavers are still more confined to the cheapest food"²³ The Muslim weavers (momins) who could not live like the Hindus were in far worse circumstances. There was not a manufacturing town which did not exhibit marks of decay like empty houses and decreasing population by the approach of 1822. This had been attributed by the people in Marshall's opinion to exorbitant taxation of their industries, as the Government used to levy a duty on each of those houses of manufacture²⁴ and had quadrupled such duties since Rastia's²⁵ time. But more than this duty was the rise in prices of grain, especially in the last three years, which weighed very heavily on all classes of people.

Marshall's description of the trade and town of Bagalkote at the end of those first few years of British rule was typical of the Southern Maratha Country. Under the Rastia and even so late as Baji Rao's management it was the greatest town in the Karnatak. Its past prosperity was due to the existence of a native court, and the general condition of

²³ Statistical Report, Marshall, p. 52.

²⁴ "There seems little doubt that the profits of the Hugars were considerably lower and yet their assessment is from 12 to 18 rupees per house. Their headman (shetee) says his (6) houses are indebted 200 rupees to Shahpoor merchants." (Marshall's Report of June 25, 1820)

²⁵ "In the second year of the Mahratta possession, the district was delivered in charge of Mulhar Ravo Rastia...the Rastia's administered to the last on equitable and humane principles."

the people under the late rule was one of more wealth, and that had kept up the demand for manufactures. It would be scarcely employing too strong a language, wrote Marshall, to say that its former prosperity had absolutely gone, and that the merchants whose sole dependence it was were sinking into poverty.

The market with its tolerably well-laid streets, roomy shops, plainly calculated for considerable traffic, were still and spiritless; the boards which separated the body of the shop from the covered seat in front were seldom opened, even on market days. The sale of fine cloth at the Dusra alone, at which festival all wealthy and powerful Marathas were in the habit of giving clothes as presents, was said to have exceeded half a lac of rupees. Two thousand brass and copper vessels, chiefly imported from Ahmednagar, besides others made in the town, had been annually bought by the court and soldiery. All that had depended on the expenditure of the people of rank, was in 1822 nearly annihilated; those classes of Marathas were no longer met with. Even those who could still afford to purchase valuable goods were content with the cheaper sort; "there were no occasions of show or inducement for men without office or trade to dress well; a greater number were even bereft of all means."

This ruination of trade was due to the heavy taxation which affected especially the traders and dealers in fine cloth. In Bagalkote, for instance, there were 18 houses of manufacture, and the taxes on all of these did not, under the Rastia, amount to 400 siccra rupees, the leading manufacturing house paid only 88 siccras. Under the British the tax on the same firms was estimated at 1,677 Madras rupees, or nearly 1,900 siccras, the leading house paying 500 siccras. This error was due to the British assuming as legitimate average the extraordinary rates of the Peshwa's revenue farmers. But even to this average there had been annual additions, in spite of the fact that there were no grounds for supposing an increase in the means of the people.²⁶ Under the late sirsubas trade was more brisk and taxes more readily paid than under the British; for the good native governments, observed Marshall, always considered trade and manufactures as requiring a certain amount of fostering and care.

²⁶ Statistical Report, 1822, Marshall, p. 150.

CHAPTER IV

BOMBAY KARNATAK

(1843-1868)

HAVING described the situation, climate and physical features of the talukas of Belgaum and Dharwar, it now remains to relate the general conditions prevailing at the commencement of the new land survey and settlement. The first twenty-five years of British administration had left the Karnatak in poverty and economic depression. In the Southern Maratha Country, as in the Bombay Deccan, the revised assessment was of utmost importance and was eagerly awaited by the ryots.

The chief products of the red lands of the Karnatak were bajri and the early monsoon variety of jawari. The black soil of the plains, on the other hand, in addition to khurrif crops, was well suited to the growth of cotton, gram, wheat, linseed, white jawari and all the ordinary products of the late, or rubbi harvest. The harvest of the plain villages consisted wholly of late crops, and safflower and linseed were extensively grown. Irrigated lands were to be met with in a limited number of villages; but they were of considerable extent and importance. The irrigated crops were of two kinds. The principal and most important one was sugar-cane, and the immediate crop was rice, or different kinds of vegetables. Besides these, there were the supari and coconut trees and the pan creepers. These were considered the most valuable, but the expense attending them was very considerable. To the cost of labour and manure was to be added the yearly rent for a number of years in which the trees in their young state yielded no return. There were six kinds of oil-seed crops, namely, ondla, koosheebee, ugushee, elloo, goorello and poondee. With the exception of the first, all the seeds of these plants were mixed, and their oil extracted in the mills. The oil was both used for burning and cooking. In some of the villages tobacco grew luxuriantly. In the Belgaum District the garden crops were plantains, sugar-cane and culinary vegetables, but no pan, betelnut and cocoanuts, similar to the southern talukas of Dharwar. The dry crops were those common in the Southern Maratha Country like jawari, cotton, gram and wheat. Of the crops belonging to the late harvest, one-fourth was cotton, and to which one-eighth of the whole cultivated area was devoted. No less than twenty-three varieties of rice were cultivated; but the people of Belgaum rarely consumed it due to their poverty for most of it was exported to the Con-

can. In many villages coffee was extensively and profitably cultivated. In the talukas adjacent to the Canara jungles a superior description of timber was found.

One of the important market towns of the Karnatak, at the commencement of the new land survey, was Hubli. It was situated in a central position, and was the market where the whole of the surplus produce of the neighbouring villages was disposed of. It was one of the most flourishing towns of the Southern Maratha Country in 1844. In spite of this prosperity, Hubli was much inferior even to any of the minor towns of the Bombay Deccan. Guduck, Betgerri and Mundurgi were also important markets of the district. Both Guduck and Betgerri were resorted to by the inhabitants of the surrounding villages to dispose of their bundles of thread in order to obtain money for the purchase of weekly supplies. A considerable portion of the inhabitants of these two towns earned their livelihood by weaving cloth. The merchants residing in the large bazar towns of Kurige, Hawehri, Sawanur and others, were the chief purchasers of jawari grown in the district. Besides jawari, cotton was in much greater demand in these markets. The Kumpta sawkars sent agents to Hawehri to purchase cotton for them. Wheat was the export of importance next to cotton, and was bought in considerable quantities for the Bellary market by traders visiting Dambal. It was also sent occasionally to the Hubli, Dhawar, Nurgund and Badami markets. Cotton and wheat were both usually paid for in cash, and were therefore of chief importance to the cultivator in enabling him to raise money for the payment of his assessment. In respect of markets, Tadas enjoyed the same advantages as Hangal. The chief centres of trade in this locality were Bomanhali, Alur, Maharajpeth and Adur. Dhundshi was a great mart for the cotton, rice and sugar of the plain villages. Dhundshi though itself an inconsiderable village, and without any wealthy traders, was perhaps the most important bazar in the Collectorate south of Hubli. In Misrikota the bazar of Kalghatgi was by far the most important. There was a good deal of traffic between Goa and Kalghatgi.

There was hardly any agricultural produce exported from Gokak owing to the large internal consumption afforded by the town itself, which was "one of the most important in the Southern Maratha Country." Gokak was the greatest market for the whole district perhaps with the exception of a few of the most easterly villages, which, however, had the large markets of Mahingpur and Rubkavi. Jalechal was favoured for the sale of agricultural produce and Bagalkote for manufactured

goods. Ilkul was the principal market for cotton and silk manufactures. It was well attended by the people of the surrounding villages, and even from those of the Nizam's country. Ameenghur was a great mart for the Concan produce. Wealthy sawkars resided there through whose hands most of the cotton grown in the district found its way to the coast. The Athni bazar was often visited by traders from Honwar, Telsung and Aeenapur. The people to the south of Athni frequented the bazar held at the large manufacturing town of Rubkavi in the Sangli Jagir. In Beil Hungal, native cloth, apparel, kumlies, cheap ornaments and various articles of iron were sold. There were several shops which contained supplies of cloth, spices, and all the usual necessities and luxuries of the cheaper kind, but articles of European manufacture could only be bought at Belgaum and Shahpur. Saris from Guduck and Betgerri cholis and dhoturs from Hubli and apparel of all kinds from Tadputri, Gudwal and Raichur in the Madras Presidency were also to be found in these shops. Hubli was probably the only town in the Karnatak which rivalled Belgaum and Shahpur as a centre of trade. Market towns of lesser importance were Chundghur, Patua and Ankalgji. Both the talukas of Chickodi and Bedi were well supplied with markets, especially the latter, with its principal mart of Nandigad which was a place of considerable trade in salt and other Concan produce.

A considerable trade was carried on in Hawehri. No less than 300 gonis of cardamons were imported, which valued at Rs.240 for each bullock-load, amounting to the sum of Rs.72,000 annually. Supari was another product of importance, and was imported to Homnabad in the Nizam's dominions. Some three or four thousand rupees' worth were annually exported from Hawehri. Sawkars not only exported the produce of the districts but carried on a considerable exchange trade between Bellary and Mysore on the one side, and Dharwar districts and Canara on the other. The annual trade at Ranibednore was estimated at Rs.2,00,000, and of Byadgi at Rs.90,000. The most important articles of trade were cotton, silk stuffs, and kumlies. By way of cultivated produce there was raw cotton, betelnuts, sugar-cane, rice, raw silk, and indigo. The plain villages exported cotton and a great portion of their rice and sugar to the market of Dhundshi. This market was frequented by merchants from Belgaum, Ron, Bagalkote, Kittur and from every town of consequence within 80 or 100 miles. "It is the great mart in this part of the country for the people of the black plains to meet and exchange their produce." Salt was often imported in exchange for wheat, mug, toor, cloth, or whatever commodity the

market might have to give in exchange. The trades exported mostly chillies, rice, gur, sugar, oil and oil-seeds westward to the coast. Sugar was exported to Kumpta for the Bombay market. This trade in sugar Wingate expected to increase if the tanks were put in repair.

In the Belgaum Collectorate, should a ryot wish for English cloth, iron, etc., or to sell his rubbi crop he would proceed to Belgaum; should he be desirous of disposing of a surplus of the Khurrif produce, to Shahpur, should he wish to purchase native cotton cloth, to *Bazehevare*; and if it were his object to buy a kumli or a bullock, or to dispose of his ghi, to the bazar of Beil Hungal. No fine cloth was imported, a little iron came from the Concan, but the principal imports thence were salt and cocoanuts in return for the import of rice. A good many articles of a miscellaneous nature were manufactured both for export and internal consumption. Most of the cloth worn in the Collectorate was made in sufficient quantities to meet not only the wants of such important towns as Belgaum and Shahpur, but those of other towns and villages, as well as for export to places along the coast. At each market day the Belgaum bazar was supplied by about 1,500 bullocks laden with salt, cloth and grain, brought from the plain districts to the east and south-east even beyond Dharwar. Belgaum was besides the most important centre for trade between the coast and the interior. Bagalkote had considerable transactions with Hubli and Sholapur, being used as a depot for the staples of both these marts. The cotton from the markets of Sumpgaon was exported to Vingorla. A coarse description of hemp was manufactured into "sootlee" or ropes; gunni bags were made and sold at a profit in the Belgaum bazars.

In Parasgad, the manufacturing towns were Sowndutti, Mudgud and Manoweli. There were in these towns about 1,000 looms for the manufacture of coarse cotton fabrics of various kinds suited to the consumption of the country around, but some of which were also exported to Canara and the coast. Mudgud and Manoweli were also known for their dyed and printed stuffs, in the preparation of which upward of 200 families found employment in 1849. Of the total population of 12,337 in Gokak, nearly half were dependent on the manufacture, dying and printing of cotton cloth. The chief manufacture of the town was an inferior sari exported largely for the supply of the coast and Bombay markets. It was also sent to Belgaum, Sangli and Meritch, but not further inland. The annual export of manufactured cotton was roughly estimated at 700 bullock loads. In 1849, Wingate estimated the trade of Gokak at Rs.1,05,000. The weavers were not half

as well off in 1844 as they were twenty years before. A weaver on the advent of Wingate earned 2 annas a day "which is certainly a low pay for a skilled workman, even in a country where provisions are so cheap."

The Canarese talukas of Badami and Bagulkote were well known as manufacturing centres even in the early years of British rule. At the advent of the new survey, the population of Badami had considerably increased, and quite a large proportion of its people were still subsisting on manufactures in 1852. The chief manufacturing towns were Kehroor and Gooludgoda, but besides these, considerable industrial activity was also carried on in several of its other villages. The chief manufacture of Kehroor was low-priced saris exported to Poona, Bombay, and the Concan. About 1818 there were no less than 500 looms at work, but within three years they fell to 350 due to the high price of cotton. Besides the fall in the price of goods, even a demand for the Kehroor saris had fallen, due to the competition of Gokak and other towns on the coast. On the other hand, Gooludgoda prospered and had in 1852 about 1,300 looms at work manufacturing nearly all kinds of cloth. These goods were either a cotton and silk mixture, or wholly of silk. The cotton yarn used in those manufactures came from England. "It is satisfactory to find that these finer manufactures, which require comparatively little of the raw material instead of being displaced by British goods are actually on the increase," wrote Wingate. The annual output of Gooludgoda was valued at 1 lacs of rupees and it was nearly all exported to Sholapur, Poona, the Concan and Bombay. The manufactures of the towns of Badami and Moodkovee were of a coarse kind similar to those of Kehroor, and were in the same depressed state.

This increase in Gooludgoda manufactures hardly balanced the loss sustained in other quarters by the weavers. Even the Gooludgoda weaver was feeling the pressure of English goods, and as Wingate wrote, even if the English manufactures had not successfully replaced the native, they could hardly have failed of lowering the price of the latter and thus reducing the means of those engaged in their production. There was not only the competition of England but that of other manufacturing localities, especially those on the coast. The use of English yarns in native manufactures was fast increasing by 1852, and it threatened to supplant the native yarn altogether in the manufacture of finer kinds of native goods. In the Southern Maratha Country, the weavers had so far enjoyed the advantage of an abundant supply of cheap yarn spun from cotton raised in their immediate neighbourhood

or nearly all around, but this advantage disappeared when they had to obtain yarn from Europe. The advantage would then naturally pass to the towns on the coast where supplies of imported yarn were cheaply obtained, and a time was feared when the inland manufacturing population would have to shift to the cities on the coast. These fears were never realised, since an equally staggering blow by the multiplicity of English goods in Indian markets was given to all towns whether inland, or on the coast.

Though the population increased, the manufactures fell in Bagalkote. Only 500 to 600 looms were at work manufacturing "dhotur joras," cloth worn by the upper classes. They had been made of cotton with a silk border, and varied in price from 8 annas to Rs.10. The lower priced varieties were exported to Poona, Sholapur and Bombay. The turbans of Bagalkote, once famous and esteemed, had fallen off greatly and were insignificant on Wingate's advent in that town.

At Ilkul in Hungund no less than 3,000 souls were employed in cotton and silk weaving. Saris and cholis were the staple manufactures, particularly the latter of which between one and two thousand rupees' worth were said to be sold every week. Most of these looms were owned by the weavers themselves, who could earn $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 annas a day. The weavers, wrote Anderson, asserted that trade was much less brisk than it was ten years before, and attributed it to the enhanced price of raw silk and to the competition of English manufactures. These assertions Anderson denied, for according to him in 1853, the looms were increasing and a new quarter had for that purpose been added to the town of Ilkul. Besides Ilkul, there were Kumutgee, Sooleebhavee and Goodoor, where coarse cotton fabrics were manufactured. There were also at Kumutgee 50 houses of coppersmiths whose wares were exported to Bagalkote, Belgaum and the Nizam's country. There were in all 2,700 weavers in those three towns and several others in about ten villages making an additional aggregate of about 500 souls. "The mixed cotton and silk manufactures," wrote Anderson, "by far the most valuable, may be considered to be prosperous, . . . but there can be no doubt that in this taluka as elsewhere the weaver of common cotton fabrics finds himself undersold by English manufactures, and that the competition on their part is yearly increasing and gradually driving him out of the field." This depression in manufactures invariably told on the agriculture as testified to by both Anderson¹ and Wingate. *

¹ "Here as elsewhere the common indigenous manufactures could not stand up against the increasing competition with England, and in their decline could but depress their dependent agriculture."—Sel Rec. Bom Gov No LXXXI.

The manufacturing activity of the several other towns of the Belgaum Collectorate can be briefly summed up. In the town of Athni there were 400 souls supported by weaving coarse cotton cloth in 1853. There were in all 2,327 looms for cloth and 94 frames for blankets. The total number of souls supported by manufacture in the entire taluka were a little under 5,000. The whole of the manufactured output of Belgaum, and the more important Shahpur, was all consumed in the vicinity. The population of Ankalgi, Chikodi and Bedi, with the exception of a few, was mainly agricultural.

Hubli had long been a place of commercial importance and was considered to have increased in size and population under the British. It possessed a number of well-established banking houses and trading firms. The trade chiefly consisted in cotton fabrics manufactured in the town itself. The women, in addition to household duties, busily devoted their spare time to spinning, and the yarn thus manufactured, after supplying the weavers of the taluka, found a ready market at Hubli. The towns of Guduck and Betigerri manufactured saris of a quality and durability of colour far superior to those of Hubli, rendering it an article of demand in the neighbouring markets, and some were even exported to Punderpur. Bankapur manufactured cotton and woollen fabrics for domestic consumption only. Its markets disposed of every week some 300 articles of various sizes. Besides cloth it manufactured shoes, sandals and cotton twist. The total goods disposed of on each market day was estimated at Rs.1,500.

Kod and Dharwar talukas had no manufactures, even Mi-rikota had only 24 looms producing weekly about Rs.50 worth of coarse cloth. Unlike these talukas, a considerable manufacture of cotton stuffs and woollen blankets of a fine description were manufactured in the larger villages of Ranibednore. They were mostly for internal consumption, but were at times exported to Mysore and Canara. Besides these goods, the more expert weavers made silk cloth called "pitambars." The bazar of Arlikatti in Tadas disposed of, on every market day, its manufacture of cotton cloth, worth Rs.300. The villages of Mulgund Mahal showed no industrial activity, but in Nurgund there was a considerable number of weavers working nearly 400 looms in all, of which one half were in the village of Seerol.

The Inam Commission had added quite a number of alienations to Government lands and the population in the Karnatak showed a distinct rise by 1848. Bedi, Chikodi and Badami all had a population of over a lac covering approximately 2,178 square miles. With the exception

of Gokak, every other taluka in Belgaum had a population of over 70,000, making a total for the entire Collectorate of 9,32,332 souls.² In Dharwar, only Hubli had 1,19,474 souls, the other talukas had between sixty to ninety thousand souls giving a total estimate of 6,54,895³ souls for the entire Collectorate. Therefore, in 1848, the total population of both Belgaum and Dharwar districts was estimated at 15,87,227 souls which was an increase of 7,48,470 souls over the population of 1827-28. The total population in 1849 of both the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak was estimated at 42,81,833 souls.

The condition of the people on the advent of the new land settlement differed from taluka to taluka. Though every taluka, with the exception of a few, could show some substantial ryots, the majority were invariably very poor. It could not be denied that this poverty was due in no small measure to the heavy land assessment of former years. Mr. Simson, the Revenue Commissioner, writing to the Bombay Government in 1842 when requested to sell the ryot's lands for the arrears of rent observed that continued over-taxation had reduced the people to a state of extreme poverty; which had been responsible for preventing them from making most of their lands.⁴ "Their poverty being to a certain extent the effect of our mismanagement, it appears hardly fair to turn on them and say that unless they immediately improve their tillage... we will sell their hereditary property; and thus insist on their making the surplus profit of a good year pay for the deficiencies of partial failures." The Government denied "such sweeping accusations of mis-management" and wrote that it was not becoming "in so high a functionary to indulge in remarks" which implied a neglect on the part of the ruling authority "of one of the most important of its duties."⁵ Simson replied that "the extreme poverty of the cultivating classes has long, I believe, been the subject of universal remark, and without any reference to my own opinion on the subject I found the report of almost every officer who was considered an authority on such points, attributing this poverty in a greater or less degree to over assessment."⁶

In spite of excessive taxation, the ryots of Hubli and Nuwulgund could not be termed as a destitute peasantry, wrote Wingate. They were

² Letter of Jan 4, 1848.

³ Letter of Feb 23, 1848

⁴ Letter No. 600 of April 26, 1842.

⁵ Government Resolution No. 8161 of June 11, 1842.

⁶ Letter No. 834 of June 16, 1842.

much better off than similar classes in Sholapur, Poona and Ahmednagar. At the same time their condition of late years had greatly deteriorated.⁷ In Dambal, the majority of cultivators were in needy circumstances as might be expected in a district which was as yet only recovering from the injuries of long years of neglect.⁸ Unlike the former talukas, the ryots in Bankapur had kept their lands in a good state of culture and raised far superior crops to those obtained from ordinary husbandry. The people of Hangal appeared better clothed and fed than elsewhere, it was remarked that the women and children had invariably some sort of trinket, either of gold or silver, about their person. There was abundant evidence that Kod must have been once the fairest of all talukas in the Southern Maratha Country "But even in turn it was fair to look upon, and an eye accustomed to the bare and monotonous aspect of the Southern Maratha Country in general, is delighted with the view from any little eminence over its grassy glades, fringed with the varied foliage of the mango, the tamarind, the cocoanut and date palms, among which tanks are seen at intervals glistening in the sunshine, while thin canopies of smoke hang lazily but gracefully over the tops of trees which conceal the runous villages from view."⁹ In 1848 all was changed. Its fine plains, for the most part, lay un-tilled; its richest bottoms suited to rice were over-grown with date jungle; its tanks were choked up with mud; its once populous villages had dwindled away to a few miserable huts, and its active and flourishing agriculturists to the most poverty-stricken and spiritless peasantry. With slight variations in the above description the general condition of all villages in the Dharwar Collectorate "was in a very discreditable state." During the rains the main streets of every village were ankle-deep with a steaming mixture of dung and mud. Intoxication prevailed, and on bazar days the street in the vicinity of every spirit shop was filled with drunken brawlers.

Writing on the possibility of improving the life of the agriculturist, Mr. Mitchell, superintendent of survey in Belgaum in 1853, expressed the following opinion: "There is a long, steep hill to be climbed by the Indian agriculturist before he learns to avail himself of his opportunities as the British agriculturist does. To say nothing of the utter absence of the care of stock, he does not pay that thrifty attention to the collecting of his manure, etc., which would be desirable."

⁷ Report No. 445 of Oct. 25, 1844

⁸ Report No. 554 of Sept. 20, 1845.

⁹ Report No. 235 of Dec. 21, 1848.

He also pointed out the immense difficulty that a ryot had of disposing of his products, or even of stowing them away; and many a time he was compelled to sacrifice, or dispose of his bulky goods in an emergency, at a considerable loss. What the agriculturist needed was an easily convertible security which would occupy small bulk and be of inverse value. But such a security rested upon an acknowledged credit, which unfortunately the ryot had not in his sawkar, and the sawkar in his ryot. It is credit alone which makes a standard of exchange value, but Mitchell felt that this credit among the native population was not reciprocated, simply because they believed every one to be acting with only selfish ends. Hence, he felt that the Government ought to be the spring from whence all circulation of credit, whether of gold, silver or paper, ought to be made more freely to pervade the country.

With the exception of the talukas of Bedi and Kittur, the general condition of the husbandry in the Belgaum Collectorate was similar to that of Dharwar. The husbandry of Bagalkote was inferior to that of Badami. Even the number of cattle was less. The villages were comparatively thinly peopled and quite a number of them were deserted. The ryots of Athni were regarded as the poorest in the Southern Maratha Country. The villages of Sumpgaon were well drained and moderately clean, and the ryots appeared in comfortable circumstances, but most of them were very deeply in debt. In Padshapur, the miserable appearance and way of living gave evidence of the distress into which the ryots were plunged by the usurious exactions of their creditors, who were the banias and sawkars.¹⁰ The above conditions were generally prevalent in nearly every other taluka of the Collectorate. It was in the midst of such widespread depression, all over the Karnatak, that Wingate began the new survey and settlement.

Regarding the past revenue management, there were no reliable sources, and constant changes in the fortunes of the Southern Maratha Country had destroyed even what was available.¹¹ All that Wingate

¹⁰ "Savee (the poorest and cheapest grain grown) is the food of the ryuts—seasoned perhaps with a few dried chillies and a little salt; and their dress consists of a coarse and cheap kumbly, and a dirty piece of cloth or rag tied round their heads. An oil light is an unusual sight in a village; a blazing wood fire, which is to be had for the collecting of the fuel, is kept burning—particularly during the whole of the cold and dreary nights of the rainy season—to answer the threefold purpose of keeping them warm, cooking their poor and scanty meal, and lighting their habitations"—Report of March 26, 1855.

¹¹ "The Mahrattas succeeded and one of their first measures was to raise the standard assessment. The town of Dharwar was plundered and burned by Parshram Bhu Patwardhan in 1790. Similar outrages followed until it passed into the hands of the British in 1817."—Report No. 235 of Dec. 21, 1848.

could rely on were the accounts of the last twenty-eight years, and even these were neither absolutely correct nor complete. The fall in agriculture so far was, in Wingate's opinion, unquestionably due to over-assessment. "As in other districts," he wrote, "the revenue realised in the first few years of our administration was very high, which gave rise to an exaggerated estimate of the capabilities of the district." Reporting on conditions for instance in the Kod taluka, Wingate wrote: "It is sad to think of the development of the resources of this fine taluka having been so long retarded by the pressure of an insupportable taxation, but a day of brighter promise has at length dawned, and hope already beckons the dispirited peasantry to a career of industry that will soon reward them with comfort and abundance."

The assessment was assumed to be only a matter of conjecture by Wingate, in which the greatest danger lay on the side of excess. Let the conjecture be too high and the country was ruined, let it be rather lower than it was, and there would be a small sacrifice of income to the Government, but the foundations were laid deep of the happiness to the ryots and of enlarged resources to the Government in the future. This was to be the first principle of the new land assessment. Various other suggestions for the successful working of the new land settlement were proposed by Wingate. (a) Great part of the energy and time of the native revenue servants had been wasted in the ruinous attempt to force cultivation beyond the means and exigencies of the cultivators. "This pernicious interference with the private concern of our ryots has been checked of late years; but it must be wholly rid of in order to afford the new order of things a fair chance." (b) It was necessary to withhold land from pauper ryots. It was feared that such an action would perhaps throw much land out of cultivation, but Wingate was for placing his new assessment on a sound basis "rather than continue what is indefensible." (c) The time for the payment of revenue instalments had to be changed. So far the Government demand came when the crops were standing in the field, this had resulted in sending the ryot to the sawkar who gave at a high rate of interest the sum for the revenue instalment. Merely by putting the date of payment a little further away than usual, the ryot would find sufficient time to dispose of his crops and pay the assessment from the realisation. (d) Finally, here as in the Bombay Deccan, the success of the new survey and settlement depended on improved means of communications and transport.

The new land settlement marked an improvement in every taluka of the Bombay Karnatak in its tillage area and revenue collections:

BELGAUM

Years	Taluka	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees
During 10 years ending 1867-68	Parasgad	89,422 rose to 160,814	65,166 rose to 1,19,120
During 10 years ending 1867-68	Gokak	53,103 rose to 86,045	22,444 rose to 45,281
During 12 years ending 1862-63	Yadav	13,202 rose to 21,308	8,904 rose to 12,732
During 12 years ending 1862-63	Athni	92,369 rose to 177,643	37,419 rose to 69,659
During 10 years ending 1864-65	Sampgaon	1,05,643 rose to 1,27,689	1,35,617 rose to 1,55,031
During 10 years ending 1864-65	Padshapur or Pachapuri or Belgaum	10,028 rose to 12,518	23,026 rose to 25,428
During 13 years ending 1867-68	Chikodi	1,07,356 rose to 1,70,719	1,30,135 rose to 4,95,375
During 13 years ending 1865-66	Ankalji (petty subdivision of Padshapur)	12,083 rose to 15,294	21,810 rose to 24,380
During 13 years ending 1865-66	Bidu and Kittur	26,467 rose to 35,985	37,725 rose to 55,176
During 10 years ending 1868-69	Kagvad Jagir	1,22,932 rose to 1,85,737	97,030 rose to 1,17,157

CANARESE TALUKAS OF BELGAUM

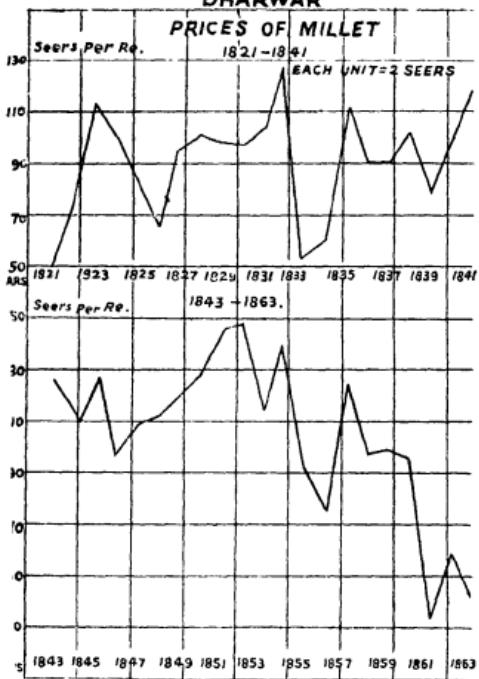
During 10 years ending 1862-63	Hungund	1,06,268 rose to 1,58,106	56,997 rose to 90,207
	Badami and Bagalkote	No statistics available for the years succeeding the new survey (1863-68)	

Years	Taluka	Tillage in Acres	Collections in Rupees
During 10 years ending 1862-63	Hubli	39,600 rose to 44,000	57,300 rose to 61,500
During 10 years ending 1863-64	Nuwalgund	2,10,000 rose to 2,32,000	2,22,000 rose to 2,40,000
During 10 years ending 1864-65	Dambal	2,22,300 rose to 2,66,800	1,61,000 rose to 1,92,000
During 10 years ending 1865-66	Bankapur	1,24,000 rose to 1,35,000	1,50,000 rose to 1,60,000
During 10 years ending 1866-67	Hangal and Tadas	1,14,000 rose to 1,27,000	1,65,000 rose to 1,81,000
During 10 years ending 1867-68	Rambeduore	1,31,000 rose to 1,63,000	1,32,000 rose to 1,56,000
During 10 years ending 1868-69	Kod	1,26,000 rose to 1,82,000	1,00,000 rose to 2,12,000
	Dharwar	Tillage area varied from about 1,19,000 acres to about 1,15,000 acres and collections from Rs 1,78,000 to Rs 1,62,000	
During 10 years ending 1867-68	Misrikote	52,000 rose to 58,000	6,44,000 rose to 75,500
During 10 years ending 1860-61	Mulgund	19,500 rose to 73,000	37,600 rose to 65,600

Well might Alexander Mackay write: "From the statement above given it will sufficiently appear that whilst Government has lost nothing in the shape of revenue by the adoption of a liberal policy, the ryot have been placed in a far better position."

We may finally give the prices of jawari in a few of the important markets of the Southern Maratha Country.

DHARWAR



Years	Hubli	Gokak	Nuwulgund	Dambal ¹²
1849	81	50	—	60
1850	60½	51	88	60
1851	81	52	81	73
1852	54	50	64	49
1853	60½	33	59	46
1854	44	36	38	40
1855	35½	36	47	46
1856	44	34	47	42
1857	44	32	48	38
1858	40½	31½	48	31
1859	38½	32	47	26
1860	25½	28½	41	18
1861	23½	29½	24	12
1862	24½	19½	24	12
1863	10½	9	13	9½
1864	11½	15	11	—
1865	11	9½	11	—
1866	10½	13	12	—
1867	22½	28½	42	—
1868	38½	—	56	—

INAMS

Before the advent of the British, it was notorious that numerous portions of the mahals in the Southern Maratha Country had become alienated as Inam, in an unauthorised and fraudulent manner. Various attempts had been made by the Peshwa's Government to check this abuse; but as was to be expected in districts so remote from the seat of central authority, so constantly subjected to change of management, so incessantly vexed by invasions and rebellions and consequent ravages of the Jagirdars and so mismanaged by disobedient Kumavisdars, those attempts always failed.

When Munro took possession of the Carnatic in 1817, he noticed¹³ these abuses of fraudulent acquisitions of Inams. But so long as he

¹² With the exception of Nuwulgund where the price is in seers of 80 tolas per rupee, the rest of the prices are in seers per rupee.

¹³ "A large portion of them will be found to have arisen from unauthorized grants and other frauds. The whole should be carefully investigated after peace is restored and the country settled, and such part of the expenditure as is of modern date and not duly authorized, should be stopped. This course is followed by the native Government at every new succession, and frequently more than once in the same reign"—Letter of March 8, 1818, in camp near Belgaum to Elphinstone.

"Many Inams will be found on examination to have been given clandestinely by revenue officers without authority. Every one from the kurnum of a village to the Sursoobah of the Carnatic, grants both lands and pensions. The Sursoobah, or his deputy, when he is about to quit his office, fabricates a number of Inam sunuds; he gives away some and sells the rest. The new Sursoobah resumes some, but continues a part of them. When such Inams have not by long possession become in some degree the fair property of the possessors, they ought to be resumed"—Letter of Aug 28, 1818. (To Elphinstone.)

retained charge of the Province, it was in a state too unsettled to admit of these Inam frauds being rectified.

In 1819, Elphinstone, as Commissioner of these conquered territories, prescribed some rules for the settlement of the Inam claims. He stated in the rules circulated that it was not intended that any general scrutiny should at once be commenced as he did not consider these regulations perfect; for he had requested his subordinates to make any suggestions that occurred to them.¹⁴ He personally looked forward to a time when their system would mature, a year hence, when it would be proper to hold an extended scrutiny of the Inam claims. It would then perhaps be expedient to grant a year's revenue to that officer who discovered the fraud from the resumption.¹⁵

The scrutiny commenced under Thackeray, whose untimely death prevented the completion. Since that time inquiries were continued by several collectors; but their proceedings had always been desultory, decisions isolated, and no regular investigation or register ever commenced. All this was due to the insufficiency, wrote Hart, of European officers, or rather the want of a particular office for the settlement of the enormous number of alleged Inams in existence. Another great deficiency in all investigations was the necessity of trusting evidence and for its genuineness there was no guarantee.

On the appointment of Goldsmid, whose name is so familiar to us regarding his survey of the Bombay Deccan, he was startled by the enormous proportion of land alienated in the shape of Inams in the Collectorates of Belgaum and Dharwar.¹⁶ Besides, the whole mahals entirely assigned as Jagirs, he found about 700 entire villages alienated in both Collectorates, and in the balance of 2,452 Government villages he estimated the minor alienations at about 60,000 estates;¹⁷ "the share left for Government, even in these its Khalsat villages, not averaging one-half thereof."

On Goldsmid's commencing to investigate, he was able to collect information which showed that many of the Inams were surreptitious alienations. It was Goldsmid who drew the attention of the Government to the importance of the Poona Daftari in 1841. He was anxious that immediate precautions should be taken for preventing any of those

¹⁴ Report No. 597 of July 1, 1848.

¹⁵ Report No. 597 of July 1, 1848.

¹⁶ Inam Commission (Select Papers), pp. 125-12.

¹⁷ Sel Rec. Bom. Gov. No. XXX.

records falling into the hands of local officers. Government assented to Goldsmid's suggestions,¹⁸ and he was deputed to the Poona Daftar to collect all papers relating to the Southern Maratha Country, a duty which he completed as far as possible by 1842.

Being in possession of these important records, Goldsmid wrote¹⁹ to the Commissioner and subsequently to the Government²⁰ in 1843. The result of which was the appointment.²¹ as we have already related in the history of Inams in the Bombay Deccan, of a committee composed of Goldsmid and Moro Punt to look into the titles of persons holding villages and lands as Inam.

In 1844, Hart, the Commissioner, was added to the Committee, but subsequently owing to successive removals of his colleagues, was left unassisted until 1847 when one Captain Gorden was appointed to assist him.

It was in June of 1843 that the very first official inquiry²² into the history of Inams was begun in the talukas of Hubli and Nuwulgund. It was in September²³ of the same year that further investigations were extended to entire villages in Inam throughout the Southern Maratha Country, and it was during these activities, the reader will recall, that an added duty was to be performed by way of inquiries into the emoluments of village and district hereditary officers²⁴. In 1845, the Commissioner was again informed to confine his duties only to Hubli and Nuwulgund;²⁵ but, in 1846,²⁶ the Court of Directors finally extended these investigations to the whole of the Southern Maratha Country. In the two years 1846 and 1847, the Commission had investigated whole villages as Inams to the total number of 15,954. Hart writing²⁷ to Government in 1848, while the Commission continued its labours, calculated that an immediate addition to the revenue would amount to Rs.18,000, of which about half would probably be immediately added,

¹⁸ Letter No 3001 of Oct. 7, 1841

¹⁹ Letter No. 131 of Feb. 9, 1843

²⁰ Letter No. 178 of May 4, 1843

²¹ Letter No. 2054 of Feb. 9, 1843

²² Letter No 2054 of June 16, 1843

²³ Letter No 3035 of Sept. 16, 1843

²⁴ Letter No 195 of Jan. 17, 1844

²⁵ Letter No 3693 of July 29, 1845

²⁶ Letter No. 2144 of April 28, 1846.

²⁷ Report No 597 of July 1, 1848

and the rest would lapse at the death of the then incumbents, the average age of whom was forty-three years.

The labours of the Commission here, as in the Bombay Deccan, continued for some years, till in 1852 it became a body with judicial powers of dispensing with all questionable Inams throughout the Presidency.²⁸

²⁸ The labours of this Inam Commission make up a list of separate records at the Poona Duftar, but are not thrown open to research. The settlement of various claims of a questionable nature as well as the Company's interests of resuming these Inam lands for their revenue all add an air of secrecy to those documents



CHAPTER V

COMMUNICATIONS—PART I

THE ponderous range of the ghauts stretched down the Bombay Deccan into the Southern Maratha Country, throwing out its woody spurs and luxuriant vegetation, presenting in its downward rush the same impenetrable barrier here in the south as it did in the north. It dropped a picturesque curtain between the lands that fringed the sea and those that lay beyond.

It is obvious that in a country so circumstanced, the line of roads which would entail the greatest difficulty and cost in their construction would be such as pursued a north and south direction. A road running say from Dharwar via Belgaum, Kolhapur and Sattara to Poona, would meet formidable obstacles at almost every five miles of its course. Between Kolhapur and Belgaum there was one formidable stream a few miles beyond Napani, and another less so near the Ghatprapha River. This portion of the road was crossed by seven streams about fifty miles apart. There were between Belgaum and Dharwar, which are fifty miles apart, two comparatively low ranges to be got over and two streams to cross. In this list of impediments were not included, observed Mackay, several minor streams which have to be bridged ere the road traversing them could be perfect¹. Such were the labours that awaited any Government who would venture to plan a scheme of roads for the Karnatak.

In 1820, almost all villages of the Belgaum Collectorate were cut off for weeks together by swollen streams and flooded rivers, and before the rains the people were forced to lay in a four to five months' store of provisions². In the years that followed, the new Government concentrated mainly on those roads which were of military importance. The communications divided themselves into two distinct military systems, one of which was called the Poona and the other the Belgaum system; each had its main or trunk line commencing at the coast, the one at Bombay and the other at Vingorla³. These trunk-lines united these two ports with the military headquarters of Poona in the north and Belgaum in the south. From Poona branched off four roads, either terminating or leading into military stations. From Belgaum the south-

1 "Western India," Mackay, p. 375

2 "Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 302.

3 "Western India," Mackay, p. 393.

ern system branched off into three roads, all terminating in the military stations of Belgaum, Kolhapur, Kaladji and Dharwar. Besides these military roads, the Company did in its own interest think of a road about 1820 over the Ram and the "Guneshgoody" Ghauts in order to facilitate the conveyance of cotton to the coast.⁴ The work of repairing and laying out the road was first entrusted to a party of pioneers, aided by prisoners⁵ The prisoners fell sick and many died, whereupon the "wodurs" whose habits fitted them for this task were chosen by Thackeray to finish the road.⁶ In February of 1824, we learn that a new road from Belgaum to Vingorla by the Ram Ghaut was completed.⁷

In 1826, Captain Clunes noticed that, besides the three main lines of military roads, two others also centered at Belgaum. Two went north to Poona, one went north-east to Kaladji and Sholapur, one went south-east to Dharwar, and one went to Goa and Vingorla in Ratnagari.⁸ Few if any of these roads were in good order. In 1829 the roads joining the lands of the Bombay Karnatak with the coast were described as wretched tracts unworthy of the name of roads. After 1829 upwards of fifteen years little seemed to have been done to improve the roads.⁹

The system of roads in the Karnatak was certainly more calculated to be of benefit to trade, but that such was not the object in planning or constructing it was evident from the fact that for the same cost roads more servicable in a commercial sense might have been constructed in the same neighbourhood.¹⁰ Travelling through the Karnatak, Mackay wrote that it was certainly surprising to find that the point at which all roads in the system converged was that which was the military headquarters of the division. He therefore came to the conclusion that when the Company undertook the construction of roads, whatever commercial importance they might have assumed, was merely a happy coincidence to their position as military roads. Such commercial consideration weighed lightly against the maintenance of control over the conquered territories by well planned military communications.

Turning our attention to the system of transport, we learn that here, as in Maharastra, the oppressive begari system was in practice.

⁴ Letter No. 203 of Aug. 4, 1820

⁵ Letter of Sept. 13, 1820; Letter of Sept. 22, 1820

⁶ Letter No. 228 of Oct. 1, 1820; Letter of Sept. 29, 1820; Letter of Oct. 29 1820

⁷ Letter No. 818 of Feb. 26, 1824.

⁸ "Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 302.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ "Western India," Mackay, p. 394.

Thackeray wrote,¹¹ in 1820, that during his Jummabundy tour he had the occasion to talk freely with the ryots respecting their condition, and though the complaints were varied and many, it was usually pointed out that the greatest grievance of all was the practice of pressing coolies and putting supplies in requisition. These complaints were found not only in the villages near the roads, but even in those in remote situations.

This method of requisition of coolies and carriage was somewhat similar, observed Thackeray, to the press-gang method of recruiting for the Navy in England. In England the independent spirit of the people usually prevented a press gang from exceeding its powers, but in the Carnatic, when the Amildar sent out his foraging party for coolies, the natives seldom withheld either their labour or their property when they were demanded in the name of the sirkar.

In every other country in the world, wrote the Collector, troops and travellers provided their own carriage, and if at all coercion was to be exercised in the Carnatic, it was desirable that it be exercised only on emergent occasions. The difficulty was to permit this power in any degree and at the same time prevent the abuse of it. A complete prohibition of this begari system, it was felt, would create great inconvenience in the Carnatic until an improved state of transport was introduced. Thackeray therefore felt that the evils of the begari system could be lessened by fixing rates of transport and coolie hire,¹² and compelling every person to advance the amount to the village officer who was expected to provide the carriage. This measure, in his opinion, would remove one great evil of the begari system. The coolies who had so far seldom or never received their hire would then do so.¹³

¹¹ Letter No. 200 of July 24, 1820.

¹² "In case when travellers may be obliged to depend on the village for carriage they shall procure it only according to the following rates:

Rates of Hire	
For each coolie per coss	2 pice
For each bullock per coss	4 pice
For each bandy per coss	12 pice

48 of such pice being equal to a Madras rupee. (Proclamation of July 24, 1820.)

¹³ "When two or three hundred coolies are required, and only a day's notice is given for procuring them, the peons often seize upon inhabitants (with the exception of Brahmuns and Soukars) indiscriminately, driving them in a herd to the place of rendezvous, and pen them like cattle until the arrival of the baggage. The sufferers on these occasions seldom think of being paid, and consider themselves in luck if relieved from their loads at the next stage; indeed the fear of being pressed still further induces them to throw down their loads and run away before they have completed the first stage."—Letter No. 200 of July 24, 1820.

Regarding the requisition of provisions, it was proposed to overcome that difficulty by deputing with every detachment of troops officers of supply, to furnish provisions and see them paid for. For the successful working of this plan, timely intimation of the approach of troops was always to be sent to the Collector of that district where the detachment would be temporarily stationed.

In a Proclamation, Thackeray stated that the practice of pressing coolies had been found harassing to the natives of the country and inconsistent with justice and good government. It was therefore necessary to enforce certain regulations throughout the Southern Maratha Country. (a) Any person either pressing coolie or carriage was subject to apprehension and trial before a magistrate, (b) Every traveller must provide his own carriage, and the public servants would not aid him except under the regulations laid down for hire, (c) One day's previous notice was to be given to the Kotwal, Patel, or the village headman, of the number of coolies required and the hire for which was to be paid in advance; (d) The village officer was under no circumstance to press the ryots, or the coolies, but was to procure them without violence; (e) No set of coolies was to be taken farther than one stage of the journey, (f) The village headman was to show these rules to every traveller, and a violation of them meant a fine or imprisonment; finally, (g) The list of stages where carriage was procurable had to be sent to the principal stations in the districts.

With the evidence of 1821 before us to end the oppressions of the begari system, we are still in a position to show that in spite of these regulations, constant vigilance was required to forestall oppression. In 1825, we have Stevenson writing¹⁴ to Baber that "notwithstanding every precaution, the evil still existed". The worst abuses regarding the transport regulations came from the troops. On Chaplin's inquiry as to how far the regulations had ended the abuses of the begari system, Baber wrote¹⁵ that he would only be misleading Government were he to say anything to lead them to suppose that the evil practices did not continue, or that he possessed means not possessed by the late Thackeray to put an entire stop to it. In 1826, Baber drew the attention of the Commanding Officer Pollock, of the Dooab Field Force, to the lawless conduct of his two subordinates Cunningham and Briggs who had threatened the mamlutdar of Rhone and compelled him to give free transport and provisions. Pollock, in a courteous reply, regretted that in spite of all

¹⁴ Letter No 1103 of May 1, 1825

¹⁵ Letter No 1489 of April 17, 1826

the publicity he had given the regulations they should have produced so little effect. He was anxious to punish all such offenders in the future, and requested the Collector to furnish him with particulars regarding the period, place and names of the offenders that would enable him to bring the delinquents to a public trial.¹⁶ He had called on Lieutenants Cunningham and Briggs for an explanation and stated that he was very anxious to check such complaints in future which were "so disgraceful to the conduct of British soldiers"

Before 1844 the Karnatak, especially the Dharwar Collectorate, was very badly off for roads. Carts were almost unknown, and long distance traffic was carried on entirely by pack bullocks.¹⁷ There was little or no traffic westwards with the Canara and the coast. In a distance of 350 miles, between the Bhor Pass near Poona and the extreme southern frontier of the Bombay Presidency, the only cart road was by the old Ram Pass between Belgaum and Vingorla.¹⁸ This Ram Pass was too far north for Dharwar traffic. What little traffic there was went on bullocks by rough tracks to Kumpata, Ankola, and other north Canara ports. In Belgaum, similar conditions prevailed, till Mr. Reid, Member of Council in 1847, drew Government's attention to the importance and the necessity of roads or railways.

In nearly every survey report, Wingate never lost the opportunity of impressing upon Government the vital importance of good communications. "My own conviction is, that nothing short of extensive improvements in the internal communications of the country will meet the exigencies of the case; and that unless these be *speedily undertaken*, the revenue and trade of this Presidency will receive a shock from which they may never recover."¹⁹ Wingate further observed that if financial considerations prevented the improvement of communications, then Government had failed to grasp their importance. The roads constructed had in his opinion already repaid the authorities "the cost of their construction tenfold." Roads required a large outlay of money; and because they yielded no direct return, the Government was apt to forget that they gave a return at all. They were, in Wingate's estimation, the most profitable of all investments, and he did not believe that there was a line of road in the country which did not in its indirect influence on the revenue repay the cost of its construction within ten years.

¹⁶ Letter of May 23, 1826.

¹⁷ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 341.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Report No 146 of Sept 29, 1846

But looking at the little that had been done in the way of opening new lines of roads, he was "almost inclined to despair of seeing this important desideratum supplied."²⁰ At another time he apprehended it to be his duty to continue to press upon the attention of Government the vital importance of good roads to the success of the survey operations entrusted to his superintendence.²¹

Good roads were not only of vital importance to internal trade, but in the case of several talukas it meant life itself. The region was dependent on the exports of raw produce for the payment of the land assessment, and imports of salt, metals and other articles required for internal consumption. Wingate had estimated the prosperity of the country on the amount of its exports, and therefore was of the opinion that to facilitate and increase communications was of utmost importance. To him, cotton, which had an unlimited demand, had every prospect of being cultivated and exported to a very much larger extent than it was. But as things were, the value of the staple to the grower was greatly diminished by the expense of carriage to the coast over very bad roads. These circumstances had already made the cotton trade of the Karnataka precarious.²² Wingate feared its extinction, or great contraction at no distant date, with a disastrous consequence to the people and the revenue. The only saving factor was nothing else but an immediate improvement of the internal communications, and cheapening the mode of carriage. The cotton trade of the Karnataka was of undoubted importance to the land revenue of that part of the Bombay Presidency.

The period of the new survey (1843-1850) was one of plans and proposals for the improvement of communications in every taluka. The important town of Gokak possessed valuable trade with the coast, but was unapproachable from the west by carts, and hardly from other directions, owing to the wretched condition of the roads; while the villages of Parasgad were quite as unfavourably situated. A proposition for clearing a cart road from Nурgoone through Manowli and Gokak was proposed.²³ The road from Bijapur to Kolhapur passed through the town of Athni, and was the only line of communication kept in sufficient repair to be passable.²⁴ The proposed road from Meritch, east

20 Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No. CXLVIII.

21 Report No. 554 of Sept. 20, 1845.

22 Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No. CLV.

23 Report No. 246 of 1849.

24 Sel. Rec. Bom. Gov. No. CLXXXI.

and west, would greatly facilitate the transport of produce to the coast via Kolhapur and the Ponda Ghaut.²⁵ The condition of Badami and Bagalkote was no better regarding roads for wheeled carriages, but the line of road which was then being cleared between Hubli and Sholapur passed through both these talukas, and promised to be an important benefit. A scheme for clearing the many cross-roads between these talukas was also in progress.²⁶ Much improvement in traffic and trade was expected when a road under construction had brought Hungund within reach of the Belgaum and Kaladgi road at Bagalkote.²⁷ In 1814, the Madras Government sanctioned the construction of a good cart road from the upper country to the port of Kumpta, which, Wingate considered, would be very beneficial to Hubli and Nuwulgund.²⁸ The construction of a railway to Sholapur, even if it were extended to reach the banks of the Tungbhadrā River, precluded the possibility of any single line sufficing to meet the wants of the country. There ought to be two at least. The more southerly one for the Dharwar Collectorate, the Canara and Bellary *Zilla* of Madras; and the other for the Belgaum Collectorate, Jagir States and Nizam's Dominions, to some port north of Vingorla—probably Viziadrug.²⁹ The former scheme had been sanctioned by the Madras Government, and proposals for the immediate construction of the latter were already before the Home authorities, whose sanction to the plan was considered certain by Wingate.

In 1845, the first pass within the Canara limits was improved, and this pass lead far south to Honavar. About 1848, measures were taken to open a route to Kumpta. The southern talukas had so far been cut off from the road leading to the port of Kumpta by a tract hardly available for carts, and unless a road opened through it, the cotton and sugar of that part of the Collectorate, which formed a very important trade, would have to be conveyed to the coast on pack-bullocks, and the benefits which the Kumpta road was calculated to confer on that portion of the Karnatak would in a great measure be lost.³⁰ Anderson suggested the improvement of a very indifferent route from Kalghati down the valley to the port of Sadashivgad, which in point of distance was much nearer to the northern districts of the Southern Maratha Country than the port of Kumpta.³¹

25 Report No 267 of 1853

26 Report No 165 of June 29, 1853.

27 Report No. 267 of July 26, 1853.

28 Report No. 445 of Oct 25, 1844.

29 Report No. 146 of Sept. 29, 1846.

30 Report No 235 of Dec. 21, 1848.

31 Sel Rec Bom Gov No CLVI

Alexander Mackay, who travelled through the Bombay Karnatak in 1852, has left an account of the means of communication.³² In 1852 a road from Napani to Belgaum was under construction; only sixteen miles of it between Belgaum and the Ghatprabha was completed. At Belgaum itself he came in contact with a new cluster of made roads. The first deserving of attention was the one which lead from the port of Vingorla up the Ram Ghaut to Belgaum. The impracticable nature of the Ghaut had rendered that road almost useless for the purpose of commercial traffic. To get a load of moderate dimension up the Ram Ghaut was a day's work. This made road from Vingorla to Belgaum³³ continued eastward to Kaladgi, a distance of seventy-four miles. It only deserved the name of a road for the first eighteen miles from Belgaum. The rest was little better than a fair-weather track, although Rs 30,000 were said to have been spent on it. All that it had, besides the eighteen miles of tolerable road to Nessurghi, were three traveller's bungalows. The Kaladgi road was continued for about twelve miles to Bagulkote. The Bagulkote road, undertaken in the time of famine, was certainly good work.³⁴

The road from Belgaum to Dharwar was a first-rate specimen of a made road. It continued to Hubli and the Madras frontier whence it proceeded as the well-known Kumpta road. Between Belgaum and Dharwar it was unbridged and intersected by about thirty streams. The interruption which this offered to traffic may well be conceived. The chief obstacle was the Malprabha River which sometimes swelled to a great height. Mackay said that he had learnt that some natives had offered to undertake the bridging of it on certain conditions, but that no arrangement had been arrived at on the subject. "This offer," he wrote, "according to the rate at which things progress in India, will require meditation and reference for a quarter of a century at least."

The road from Poona to Belgaum, undertaken in those early years for military purposes, was still incomplete. But driven to do something, as Mackay observed, by the cry for internal improvement, the Government had proceeded to unite the two systems of military roads by a complete north and south line, to extend from Belgaum to Poona.

³² "Western India." Mackay, 1853, p. 94.

³³ Please see the map.

³⁴ "I was struck with it the moment I came upon it; for it bulged like a half buried cylinder from the ground, so well rounded that the ram was immediately shot from it, and so smooth and hard, that the wheels scarcely left their tracks upon it" (Mackay).

The total extent of the made road, actually completed, did not exceed 180 miles, which total was thus made up:

	Miles ³⁵
Vingorla to Belgaum about	70
Belgaum to Dharwar	17
Dharwar to Madras Frontier	33
Belgaum to Kulladgh (only 18 miles of the 74 really made road)	18
Kulladgh to Bagalkote	12
	180

To this the Belgaum Kolhapur road, nearly finished, could be added, making the total of nearly 244 miles of made road in the entire Bombay Karnatak in 1852. The reader will remember Wingate's suggestion of a road from Belgaum via the Ponda Ghauts to Viziadrug which appears to have been completed, but Mackay does not include it in his list of made roads.

Writing of the fair-weather roads, frequented tracks, post-office tracks, etc., Mackay was of the opinion that such plottings on a map were to be regarded as illusions, as "no one would think of including such tracks among the roads, properly speaking, of any country... these are natural tracks, merely indicating the course taken by an irregular traffic over the open surface of the country." The best of them were practicable during the fair weather for carts simply because at that time much of the surface of the country was so.

Of the total 700 miles of made road in the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak, only 140 miles were available throughout the year, the traffic on the remaining 560 miles was interrupted, during the greater part of the rainy season, by the streams that intersected them. About 300 miles, or nearly one-half of the roads, pursued a north to south direction, which made them completely useless from the commercial point of view.³⁶ Besides this, the Southern Maratha Country was most accessible from Bombay by sea, so that passengers generally proceeded by Vingorla, unless they had an object in going through the interior.³⁷

35 In the Bombay Decean we had	Miles
Road from Panwell to Poona	70
Poona to Jooner	50
Poona to Ahmednagar	70
Poona to Indapur	90
Poona to Sattara	76
Nagonta to Sattara	100
	456

The sum total or entire milage for the Bombay Decean and Karnatak came to about 700 miles. "Western India," Mackay, p. 396

³⁶ "Western India," Mackay, p. 400.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 402.

Every one, wrote Mackay, who could express a disinterested opinion, would regard the 700 miles of road as a scandalously insufficient provision to what is regarded as the chief, material prerequisite to the civilization and progress of a country. The amount spent was a miserable pittance in comparison to the revenue collected.³⁸ And even the little that had been spent so far, in Mackay's estimation, was not a sacrifice to the genius of trade but to the god of war³⁹

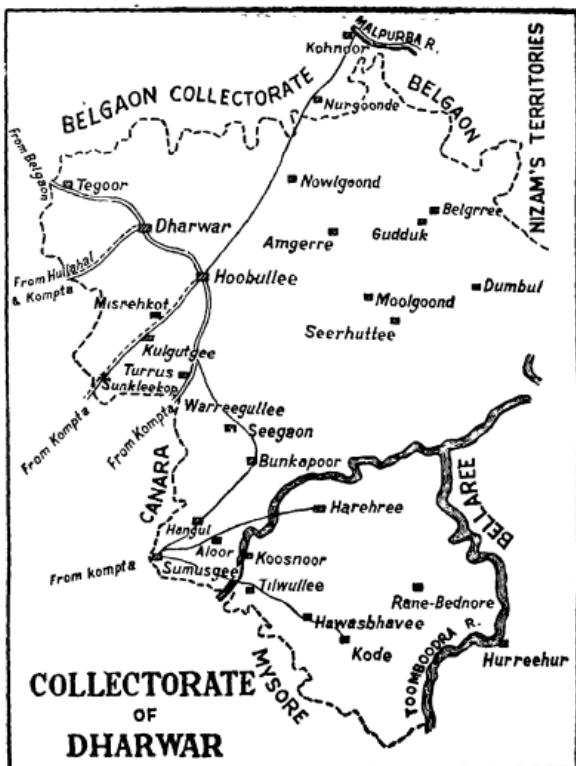
The appeals of Captain Wingate and his co-workers lead us to consider the distribution of the made roads. Of the roads leading from the ghauts, the Collectorates of Poona and Ahmednagar got the lion's share Belgaum, when it had its road to Kolhapur completed, had about 100 miles of road as far as Teygoor on the border of the Dharwar district, and about 60 miles from the Ram Ghaut to Bagalkote. The smallest share was to fall to the lot of Dharwar, which could only reckon 50 miles of made road throughout its entire length and breadth, viz., that leading from Teygoor, on the Belgaum line, through the town of Dharwar and Hubli, to the Madras frontier of Canara, a little beyond Tadas.⁴⁰ Dharwar, the greatest cotton producing centre, with an area of 3,798 square miles, could boast of only 50 miles of road which gave her one mile of road for every 76 square miles, or for every 48.640 acres of surface. Whilst it produced 50 per cent of all the cotton exported from the Deccan, it had been favoured with about 7 per cent of all the made roads in that part of the Presidency. When the revenue of Dharwar averaged nearly 12 lacs annually, the sum spent on those 50 miles of road was Rs.64,530, or about Rs.1,290 a mile; and this sum spread over many years, the percentage was scarcely appreciable. Looking at the map (No. 2), we realise at a glance that this one road from Teygoor, bending down via Dharwar and Hubli to the coast, passed through talukas which only produced grain, while the rest of the vital cotton producing district to the east was without a single mile of good road from one end of it to the other.

Bitter over this neglect of communications, Alexander Mackay observed that there could be no stronger condemnation of the Government than the fact that, notwithstanding such past neglect, it was in 1852 still doing so little. In Belgaum, the aggregate amount spent on

³⁸"Western India," Mackay, p. 402.

³⁹Compare this with the state of things in England with her 30,000 miles of turnpike road, being about a mile for every thousand acres of her surface, and for about every 600 of her people... ."

⁴⁰"Western India." Mackay, p. 406. (See the Map.)



roads during the ten years ending 1852 had been £20,508, while the aggregate revenue received for the same period had been about a *million and a half sterling*. The expenditure, then, could be calculated at 1½ per cent of the receipts. In Dharwar the actual sum invested in roads in 1852 was under Rs.9,000 which Mackay said was about equal to the salary of the first assistant to the Collector, or less than *four-fifths of one per cent* of the revenue which exceeded in 1850 11½ lacs of rupees. The entire sum to be spent on roads came to a little more than half a year's salary of the Collector.⁴¹ Mackay gave these figures to prove to the Chamber of Commerce in England the indifferent attitude of the Company toward cotton transport. Since England's loss of America, raw cotton could be found perhaps in the same quantity, if not in quality, in India. If Indian cotton was to benefit England, India must receive all transport facilities for this production, and hence Mackay's anxiety.

Between 1850 and 1860 a great advance was made in opening communications with the western coast through Canara.⁴² This was a happy activity, for within two years the American war was destined to shoot up the prices of Indian cotton to an unprecedented height. Within Dharwar limits, the last bridge on the great military trunk-road north to Belgaum, the Vardha Bridge, was completed in 1866. Since 1864 the local funds system had placed increased means for constructing and improving roads in the hands of the Commissioner and Collector. Communications had fairly improved.⁴³

IRRIGATION—PART II

NOTHING had been undertaken regarding irrigation in the early years of British rule in the Southern Maratha Country. There was ample evidence of the stupendous canals of the famous Anagundy times, which had continued to benefit the country "after the lapse of three centuries of uninterrupted disturbance and misrule."⁴⁴ "Let us hope," writes Wingate in 1846, "that our own will yet exceed them in number and importance, as well as their enduring influence on the welfare of the people." So far, all that had been contributed by their rule were "some tanks and wells repaired, and about five and twenty miles of

⁴¹ "Western India," Mackay, p. 412.

⁴² "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 393.

⁴³ "Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 303.

⁴⁴ Report No. 14604 of Sept. 29, 1846.

cheap and easily formed road... during nearly thirty years of British rule”

Mackay was even more critical of this neglect of public works when he wrote that the Government in India was unlike the Government in England, because in India it was both Government and landlord, yet the duties of the landlord it utterly neglected, while it performed the duties of a Government only to enforce the rights of the landlord²

The only solitary example (besides the repair of tanks and wells) regarding a scheme of irrigation is met with in a report by Wingate on Bagalkote in 1853.³ In the case of this taluka, it was observed that its climate was uncertain and its crops liable to fail, hence irrigation was of greater importance to the taluka, even than roads.⁴ The deep soils of the spacious plain through which the Krishna flowed were unsurpassed in fertility, could they be sufficiently watered by means of irrigation. When Wingate saw these plains they were valueless and unproductive, yielding merely scanty crops of jawari and other dry grains, instead of rich returns of sugar-cane, rice and other tropical products, which they were capable of if irrigation were introduced. The reason for not having utilised the waters of the Krishna in former years, independent of the religious objection entertained by the ryots of drawing water from the sacred stream, was the great depth of its bed below the plain throughout the whole of its course along the Bagalkote taluka. Nor was water to be obtained from the wells in the neighbourhood of the river, except at a depth so great as to make it economically useless for agricultural purposes.

The only means, then, of obtaining water for irrigating the plains of the Krishna was by daming the river itself at a sufficient distance up the stream so as to obtain a head of water that could be lead off by a canal to overflow a portion of the plain within the limits of Bagalkote. With this point in view, Wingate had examined the course of the river for many miles above Bagalkote, and had found at the turn of Gulgulleh in Athni a favourable position for the construction of a “bundarra.” The building of this “bundarra” would give ample supply of water for

² “Western India,” Mackay, p. 421

“But whether Government be or be not proprietor... there can be no doubt but that it draws from the land, even under the new survey, all the rent which it can possibly bear.” (Mackay)

³ Report No. 165 of June 9, 1852

⁴ *Ibid.*

irrigating 30,000 acres of land. The revenue was estimated at 50,000 rupees per annum, which represented at 5 per cent a capital of 10 lacs of rupees. The Government could therefore in its estimation safely incur an expenditure of 10 lacs on the work.

Wingate was of the opinion that the Krishna was not the only source of irrigation, but even the Ghatprabha, a river of considerable size, was capable of yielding a larger supply of water for irrigation, if a "bundarra" were set up at the village of Moornal which was immediately below the town of Bagalkote.

It was expected that if these works of irrigation were constructed, Bagalkote, the poorest and the most unproductive of talukas, would be transformed into the richest. With the construction of roads leading to important markets in the neighbourhood, there was every chance of disposing of the surplus due to irrigation, that was likely to affect the prices at home. It was a matter deserving of consideration that the population of the Karnatak, in Wingate's estimation, was fast increasing, and would inevitably be straitened for subsistence at no distant date, unless the soil could be made to yield a larger and larger produce in proportion to the increasing number of people. Wingate said that the climate of the tract was so subject to drought that only additional means of irrigation could give a great and reliable supply of grain. "To provide, then, the means of irrigation whenever this can be done, seems in these provinces to be especially the duty of Government."

The Malprabha River passed through the Badami taluka, but Wingate had written that he had not given sufficient care to the examination of the course to suggest a spot for the construction of a dam. But from the rocky character and comparative shallow bed, he was satisfied that a spot could be found for the setting up of a bund near the town of Manowli in Parasgad. No proper estimate of the quantity of land irrigated by such a scheme had been calculated. But the course of the Malprabha was worthy of careful examination with a view to its capabilities of affording water for irrigation.

This scheme for irrigation in Bagalkote was seriously thought of by the Collector of Belgaum, when he requested Captain North for plans and estimates for works of irrigation on the Krishna. Colonel Scott, writing to the Military Board, was of the opinion that the plan bore every appearance of being perfectly feasible, but the work to be undertaken promised to be extensive.⁵ The Government consented to give Colonel

Scott sufficient aid to look into Wingate's suggestions, but no work of irrigation would be sanctioned unless they were informed by the Military Board as to the cost of the work, and the extent of Government and Jagir lands likely to gain from the scheme under consideration.⁶

Wingate's suggestion of a canal from Gulgulleh was found impracticable by Scott, and his proposal was to carry the scheme as far up as the Gatprabha River at Ranoor in Gokak, which would enable the irrigation of a greater portion of Bagalkote. The canal so constructed would pass through Gokak, Kolhapur State, Moodhole Estate to Jaumtee and Soong in Bagalkote. The length would be 70 miles, and the expense, at the utmost, Rs.15,000 a mile; there being but one bridge.⁷ The extent of country irrigated was immense, wrote the Collector of Belgaum, and the water supply inexhaustible. The portion of Government territory immediately benefited would be the Belgi Muhal in Bagalkote, containing a cultivation of 28,000 acres yielding a revenue of Rs.17,000. Besides a portion of Gokak taluka north of the Gatprabha would also be benefited, and bring in a revenue of Rs.6,000 from the irrigation of 13,000 acres. But the greatest gain from this plan of irrigation, observed Inverity, the Collector, would go to the Chief of Moodhole and the Putwardhuns of Sangli and Jumkhandi; "yet doubtless the policy of improving the country generally would be followed by the paramount power." In return for this facility of irrigation, the Collector suggested that the states should pay Government annually a lump sum "to the extent of the water privileges conferred." Looking at the cost of construction, Inverity expected that Government would sanction Scott to continue his investigations into the capabilities of all the streams of the Bombay Karnatak.⁸

Scott's plan of extending the canal so far east of Bagalkote made Wingate feel doubtful of the advantage of pushing it so far inland⁹

⁶ Government Resolution No. 6287 of Sept 27, 1852.

⁷ Letter No 339 of May 6, 1853

⁸ At the close of his letter Inverity said that Wingate in his report (No. 165 of June 9) clearly stated the precarious climatic condition of the plains of deep fertile soil along the banks of the Krishna, and the black soil plains of the Gutpurba and Krishna appeared well suited for cotton, but there was little grown, and the exports of the articles were very limited. Wheat, Jowari, and oil seeds were also exported, but the value of the whole was trifling and he was of the opinion that immense advantage would accrue to this tract if irrigation were introduced. And although even after a water supply had been provided, want of agricultural stock would, for a time, bar the full development of the country's resources, yet eventually these difficulties would be surmounted, resulting in better cultivation and greater multiplication of population. See Letter No. 339 of May 6, 1853

⁹ Letter No 284 of May 12, 1853

He felt inclined that, at all events, and until the capabilities of the river were proved by experience, it would be preferable to limit the project to providing water for irrigation only to the southern bank of the Krishna. He concurred with Inverity of charging the States for the benefit of irrigating their lands, and even though they were likely to reap a richer harvest by the new irrigation scheme, to Wingate it mattered little, since it was the duty of the Government, he wrote, to enrich the Presidency as a whole. In spite of the difference of opinion regarding the construction of the canal, Wingate showed great anxiety to carry forward "to a completion the detailed survey and estimates required to establish the feasibility of the project" of extended irrigation for the Southern Maratha Country "It is of great importance," he wrote to the Commissioner, "that the favourable opportunities for obtaining this information by means of qualified officers, now on the spot, should be turned to the greatest advantage."

Government consented to allow Scott to carry on his investigations further, provided the Military Board agreed. Besides, terms for irrigating the State lands were to be immediately settled before the scheme determined on was carried out.¹⁰ The Military Board consented, and we find Scott having undertaken the project¹¹ No further evidence as regards the continuation of investigations for new projects of irrigation during this period (1853-1868), are available By 1854, Scott had definitely begun his survey of that part of the country where the irrigation project was to be laid.¹² Colonel Scott's project was continued from 1865 to 1867 by Major Smith under the guidance of Lieutenant-General Fife, whose name was familiar in the Deccan irrigation schemes already mentioned. Owing to the difficulties of carrying the canal through the Native States, the larger project of Scott was placed in abeyance, and a fresh scheme was drawn up with the definite object of watering only the Government lands. In 1868, the project was submitted. It comprised fifty miles of main canal commanding an area of 135 square miles. The cost was estimated at Rs.15,00,000, and the return on expenditure at six and a quarter to six and three quarters per cent. In

¹⁰ Government Resolution No. 3894 of July 6, 1853

¹¹ We learn from a letter, No. 63 of 1854, from Mr. L. H. Tucker (First Assistant Collector) to Mr. H. W. Reeves (Acting Revenue Commissioner) that Col. Scott was continuing to survey with a view to irrigation This meant that the Military Board must have consented.

¹² We again learn from a letter, No. 187 of Jan. 14, 1854, of Col Scott, that he had concluded "the field work of the survey for the proposed canal from near Dhoopdal (near the fall at Gokak) to the high land at Nusjied on the Sholapoor road near Beelgee, a point which you are aware gives me great command of the country "

1871, the scheme was put in complete abeyance, but renewed in 1873 and with varied fortunes was destined to continue into the last decade of the 19th century. Such neglect and delay are unparalleled in the economic history of any people.

Turning to the wells and tanks, there is ample evidence to show that the Company spent small sums of money now and again on their repairs.¹³ Owing to the small extent of artificial irrigation, wrote Thackeray in 1823, no general rules had been observed with respect to the repair of wells and tanks. When the land watered by them belonged to Government, repairs were usually considered as a public charge. When, however, the lands of Inamdars benefited by the repairs, they were expected to contribute in proportion to the advantages they derived from the improvement. When the village at large benefited, a general "Tutrick," or subscription, took place, and Inams had in some instances been given by Government to public spirited individuals who had repaired tanks at their own cost.¹⁴ Cows extending from 9 to 12 years were given for a well by means of which dry land was converted into a garden. A trifling cost for mud work was to be borne by the village, while all repairs of a more expensive nature by the Government, especially in poor villages, while in rich ones, cows were held out to those who built wells and tanks. From 1818 to 1823, no new tanks or water courses had been undertaken, only the old ones were repaired. Tanks and wells were much needed in Nuwulgund and several other talukas.¹⁵ Thackeray wrote that Government alone could undertake to build great tanks, and the initiative in that direction to patriotic individuals and the community should come from them.

Where there were large tanks, an officer called "Numkuttee" distributed the water and received his salary in grain. Where the tanks were small, the ryots helped themselves under the control of the Patel. In the case of Inam and Miras all those who benefited by the repairs contributed proportionately toward the expenses. The village staff only contributed when the expense of the repair was raised by the means of

¹³ Letter No. 465 of Feb. 21, 1822, Letter No. 502 of May 8, 1822.

¹⁴ "The subscribers who formerly repaired the tanks at Kangenelly received from the Sirsoobah some Enam land, the ruqum of which is Rs 46 $\frac{1}{4}$ and Gopal Bhat who repaired the tank of Konutty was rewarded with an Enam."

"In some of the Mulnud or Western talooks, the land irrigated by new and repaired tanks, has been given on cowl to the builders and improvers. The period of such Cowl depended on the expense from 7 to 21 years"—Letter No. 603 of April 8, 1823.

¹⁵ Letter No. 603 of April 8, 1823.

a general subscription. When repairs amounted to more than Rs.100, a remission was usually made, thus if the "koolwar" jumma was Rs 1,000, only Rs.800 were paid in the treasury, and the remainder went as an expense toward repairs. Such were the means and ways by which the Company met the necessity of irrigation by wells and tanks, its own contribution was merely by way of sanctioning small sums toward occasional repairs¹⁶

These occasional contributions could not improve the state of affairs. The sums spent by Government in repairs during all the years (1818-1843) that preceded the new survey were a very poor contribution in comparison to the revenue they collected. In the eight talukas of the Dhaiwai Collectorate, in a period of 11 years (1811 to 1851), they had contributed a total sum of Rs 141,533, which showed that the average annual expenditure was little short of 20,000 rupees, of which the ryots themselves had contributed more than one-third, which actually brought the Government share to only 14,000 rupees¹⁷. While the land revenue, realised for the same period, had been about 10½ lacs, the proportion spent on tanks and wells was about one and one-fifth per cent of the receipts from the land, part of which expenditure was also laid out for works of irrigation.¹⁸

In Belgaum in the five years ending 1850-51, a total of Rs.3,811 on both tanks and wells had been spent that gave a yearly average of Rs.762¹⁹. During the same period, the revenue realised averaged about 12½ lacs; so that the average expenditure for the purposes in question fell short of the *sixteenth part of one per cent* 'or about 1s. 2½d. out of every £100 of land revenue,—a proportion so infinitesimally small as to require the powers of a microscopic arithmetic to estimate it.' In 1850, a further outlay of Rs.7,500 was in process of expenditure, but Mackay sarcastically remarked that this outlay was not expected to be expended within that year, nor had any information reached him as to how many years its expenditure was to spread over. he thought that it would be made to last till about 1860.

Scarcely had these territories been conquered when the question of irrigation was agitated. Voluminous correspondence was collected,

¹⁶ Letter No. 916 of Aug 18, 1824; Letter No. 918 of Aug. 23, 1824, Letter No. 923 of Sept. 10, 1824; Letter No. 984 of Sept. 27, 1824; Letter No 1151 of June 24, 1825.

¹⁷ "Western India," Mackay, p. 430

¹⁸ "Western India," Mackay, p. 432

¹⁹ Ibid.

sifted, analysed, and compared, and various resolutions taken respecting it. And what was the consequence? Beyond the extension of the correspondence to nearly a quarter of a century, the reader must feel that very little of a practical nature had been attained.²⁰ It was, as Mackay wrote, a story of uniform indifference and stupendous neglect. "So far then as the Bombay Presidency is concerned," observed the Commissioner from Manchester, "it is impossible to escape the conviction, that Government, whilst it uses without scruple all its powers to enforce its rights as a landlord, has been uniformly and notoriously negligent of its plainest duties as such."

²⁰ "The merest driplets have been permitted to flow from the public treasury toward the different Collectorates, to keep from utter dilapidation works absolutely indispensable to life, viz., such tanks and wells as are required for ordinary village purposes, but it is in vain that we seek for any traces of improvement as regards works of irrigation arising from appropriations on the part of Government."—"Western India," Mackay, (1853), p. 440

CHAPTER VI

COTTON, SILK AND INDIGO

IN THE Bombay Karnatak, Dharwar stood first, and both its American and its local cotton was highly esteemed. All evidence showed that with fair treatment in preparing cotton for market, the two varieties grown in Dharwar would rank among the best in India.¹

In 1819, a year after Dharwar passed to the British, the Commercial Resident recommended that 50,000 to 100,000 lbs of Brazilian, Sea Island, and New Orleans cotton seeds should be distributed in Dharwar. Here as in the Bombay Deccan, the foreigners tried to experiment with a variety of cotton seeds. If American cotton was to feel a competition, the Indian cotton was to receive every facility possible. These early years were fraught with experiments. In order to induce the ryot to take pains over the experiment of 1819 with the variety of seeds, a reward of 50 pagodas or a gold chain was offered.² But the experiment was not even carried out.

In the years that followed the advent of the British, the Company was contented to buy its cotton requirements from its native subjects. In 1822, one Subaputty Modley proposed to supply Government with 2,000 kandies of cotton. The price of cotton being cheap, Thackeray proposed that it would benefit the ryots if the Company bought their produce.³ The next year appears to have created a larger demand for cotton. Thackeray invited tenders in the hope of encouraging the merchants. But he was disappointed to find that only a few merchants at Hubli offered to take the contract. On inquiry it was found that it was not known as to what quantity of cotton would be marketable that season, and besides the merchants expressed their inability to deliver the quantity required at Bombay. Thackeray was anxious to modify the terms of the contract to the extent of making it disadvantageous to Government, because he was of the opinion that such a step would tend to open a market for the surplus produce at Dharwar. There was always a large quantity of cotton on hand at Dharwar, and the customs revenue would also increase with the export trade.⁴ In 1825, the Com-

1 "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 281.

2 *Ibd.*, p. 286.

3 Letter No. 460 of Feb. 16, 1822.

4 Letter No. 812 of Nov. 20, 1823

pany's demand on cotton must have increased, for Baber proposed that if the authorities desired to procure the requisite supply, he suggested an advance to the cultivators to the extent of a moiety of the quantity they would be willing to contract for.⁵ The prices then prevailing were from Rs.50 to Rs.55 per khandy of 500 lbs.

In 1825, the most important talukas for cotton were Parasgad, Dambal, Nuwulgund, Gootul and Ranibednore from which five-sixths of the total quantity was procurable.⁶ In the same year, the Court of Directors was anxious to know how much of the land was utilised for the growth of the Bourbon seed. Under Thackeray it had been tried in four different parts of the Karnatak, but had proved an entire failure everywhere.⁷ The ryots were averse to planting the Bourbon seed because, the plant not being annual, and only productive after the expiration of a second or third year, the returns were not quick enough to pay for the labour.⁸ Baber despaired of the Bourbon standing any chance against the country cotton. However, he requested to be allowed to use convicts to continue to experiment the Bourbon seed in those waste grounds.

In 1829, under the orders from the Court of Directors, Dr Lush was to carry out experiments to improve local cotton by the introduction of foreign varieties in Dharwar. The experiments completely failed, the entire crop sent to England amounted to only four bales. The average price of Indian cotton in England was two and one-sixth annas ($4\frac{1}{4}$ d.) the pound.⁹ Between 1829 and 1832, these varied experiments continued at Dharwar, Nuwulgund and Morab, but all to no purpose. Both the Pernambuca and Egyptian cotton had also proved a failure. During 1833 the results continued most discouraging, till in 1836 the Dharwar experiments were closed.

By 1831, the Company in their capacity of sovereigns had excluded the competition of individual merchants for the purchase of cotton.¹⁰ The growers of cotton had also been subject to the oppression

⁵ Letter No. 1181 of Aug 7, 1825.

⁶ Letter No. 1196 of Aug 18, 1825.

⁷ "The reason thereot is ascribed to the seed having been sown in regur or black soil, under the idea that it was equally favourable for its culture as that of the country cotton, whereas from being a perennial plant and consequently exposed to the whole of the hot season, the wide fissures or openings in the black soil at that period leave the roots unprotected and the plant consequently dies"—"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 472

⁸ Letter No. 1197 of Aug. 19, 1825.

⁹ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 28.

¹⁰ "Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee, 1831," pp. 137, 138.

of the Company's servants, who compelled the ryots to take advances for their cotton crops and to deliver their cotton to them.¹¹ Private traders were also at liberty to make advances, but at a great hazard of never getting cotton in return. These traders had no means of enforcing their rights as the Company had.

In 1836, when experiments to improve cotton were stopped, Government offered to forego the assessment on lands growing cotton. The concession was rejected by the Court of Directors in 1838. The reader is already aware that in the following year Captain Bayles was despatched to America to bring cotton experts, and the mission resulted in the arrival of Mercer, Hawley and Channing. The lukewarm attitude which those Americans showed to the cotton experiments has already been related in the history of the Bombay Deccan.

The history of the experiments in cotton culture even in the Southern Maratha Country was none too encouraging, in spite of the fact that there could hardly have been two opinions as to the suitability of the Dharwar soil for successful experiments. Dr. Royle was perhaps one of the very few who had expressed a doubt on the favourableness of the Dharwar soil for the growth of American cotton.¹² While Shaw, the Collector, wrote that "perhaps the climate of no part of western India" approached "so near the climate of the cotton districts of the United States, as the Southern Maratha Country."

Mercer, who was entrusted with the experimental culture of cotton at Dharwar, had chosen the village of Kooseghul near Hubli, a town celebrated as a cotton mart, as the scene of his labours. During the first season, Mercer sent Dr. Royle a glowing description of his success.¹³ The next season it was reported that 2,749 acres were actually planted with New Orleans cotton. Of the several varieties planted, only the Bourbon failed. The Bourbon was then replaced by the so far successful New Orleans, with the result that Hawley described the cotton fields of that season (1844-45) as would have done credit even to the banks of the Mississippi.¹⁴

In spite of this success, we learn that in the year 1844 Shaw, the Collector of Dharwar, proposed to abolish the experimental farms, a

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² "Culture and Commerce of Cotton in India," Royle, p. 72

¹³ "Mr. Mercer considered his out-turn better than any he had seen in India."—"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 288.

¹⁴ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 290

E. H. F.—22

suggestion to which very surprisingly Mercer agreed the very next year. In spite of the success of his experiments, Mercer closed his small farms at Kooseghul and at Guduck, and continued to cultivate New Orleans in small patches in various parts of the district, on terms of contract¹⁵ with the ryots. The farms were accordingly abolished shortly afterwards.

In Belgaum, similar experimental activity was afoot when Channing¹⁶ selected the village of Negunhal in the Sampgam taluka, and acquired 300 acres of land for his experiments. Some of his cotton sold at Bombay for Rs.120 the khandy of 784 lbs.¹⁷ The Belgaum cotton only weighed about 14 bales and was considered as insufficient to prove that Channing had succeeded. In February of 1846, Channing personally recommended that only a small portion of the farm be retained, and in December of the same year it was totally abolished. Channing had suggested certain inducements as the only way of persuading the ryots to cultivate cotton. "Guarantee them a certain market for the produce by Government purchasing it until merchants or dealers come forward to do so. Let the price be known as early in the season as possible, and let it be remunerating; and have gins placed in the different parts of the country so as to be convenient to the ryot in point of distance."

These experiments being closed, the culture of American cotton was left to the mercy of the ryots. Government became the only buyers, and American cotton suffered from a lack of saw-gins. In 1846, the special inducements held out to the growers of American cotton were withdrawn. By 1848 it had been discovered that in many villages the persuasion of the village authorities had differed little from compulsion. This compulsion was stopped and the area of American cotton fell from 20,500 to 3,350 acres. This revealed that the people had grown American cotton because they had been compelled to grow it.¹⁸ Of this, Blount, the American expert, wrote: "It certainly does not look

¹⁵ "The object of this was to extend the cultivation of the New Orleans cotton; to familiarize the natives with it; and by making them the instruments of its cultivation before they were prepared to incur any risk in the experiment, to enable them to compare the quality and quantity of its produce with that of the native cotton grown in their own fields."—Royle, p. 351.

¹⁶ "It may be regarded necessary that Mr. Channing should be allowed a piece of land—rent free—on which to build his house for the purpose of raising herds, and for his own use; no objection can be made to this for a man devoting himself to a life of solitude in the middle of a heathen district... ."—Letter No. 447 of July 15, 1846.

¹⁷ "Culture and Commerce of Cotton," Royle, p. 381.

¹⁸ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 291.

well on paper to say I have only 3,400 acres to show against 23,000 last year. It is a much larger falling off than I expected."¹⁹

In 1849-50, over 15,500 acres were once again sown with New Orleans cotton. The increase was due to a better understanding with the people and better ginning arrangements. This year was considered the best New Orleans season. In the years 1850, 1851 and 1852, the area under American cotton continued to increase, and by 1852 the Dharwar New Orleans had gained so good a reputation in England that the agents of the Manchester firms in Bombay were ordered to make large purchases. The history of cotton in Belgaum was not so encouraging. The yield, though good in 1848, languished due to no buyers, especially the American New Orleans. In 1850, things improved when Government bought a quarter of the produce. The year 1852 was none too encouraging when the average acre yield of clean Orleans was not more than 6 lbs.²⁰ Yet notwithstanding these difficulties, Royle also observed that it was in the Dharwar District that the culture of American cotton had made the most extensive strides. According to Dr. Gibbon, the success was partly due to the people being vastly more enterprising, well affected, and peaceable than their Maratha neighbours, the Lingayet population of the Southern Maratha Country.²¹

In 1853, the acreage fell due to the poor quality of the saw-gins. Mr. Reid gave the following evidence before the House of Lords:

"2577 Did you ever see any of the machines for cleaning cotton?—I have often seen them, both the common native churka and the improved machines sent from home, which I have seen tried in Bombay.

"2578. Were they circulated among the native cultivators?—In the Southern Maratha Country some cleaning machines were much circulated; but these were rather an improvement upon the native wheel than machines of European invention."²²

However, great efforts were made to get saw-gins, and soon the acreage rose.²³ Compared with what he had seen between 1843 and 1850, in 1854 Anderson noticed a marked improvement and extension in cotton cultivation. In 1856-57, 108,207 acres were under American, and 196,931 under local cotton. In Belgaum the New Orleans had

¹⁹ "Commerce and Culture of Cotton," Royle, p. 365

²⁰ "Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 269.

²¹ "Culture and Commerce of Cotton," Royle, p. 380.

²² Report from the Select Committee, Dec. 1, 1852, p. 267.

²³ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 292.

proved a failure, so that in 1856 4,461 acres were under American cotton only, while the local covered 183,091 acres.²⁴ As early as 1854, the Court of Directors had realised the failure of Orlean's cotton at Belgaum. This conclusion was arrived at by the cost and receipts of the Government's experiments at Belgaum. For the three years ending 1846, the cost of Government experiments appeared to have been Rs.8,270, while the receipts in Belgaum were only about Rs.260.²⁵

The sowing of Egyptian cotton was undertaken in 1857 all over the Bombay Karnatak, but with no success. Some blamed the season while others the soil. In 1858 the cotton area showed an increase of 4,000 acres in Government lands, while in the succeeding years of Dharwar cotton, growers were very flourishing owing to the handsome profits of the American cotton. In 1860, increasing facilities of ginning raised the tillage area under New Orleans. Then began years of adulteration of local with American cotton. Dr. Forbes induced the ryots to root out local plants from the fields where the New Orleans was planted, yet in 1862 the mixing was bad, or worse than ever.²⁶ This mixture of seeds of the American with the local was perhaps due to the ginning of both the cottons together, so that the farmers complained of their plantations bearing both the trees together. Forbes was of the opinion that Government and the fear of law would alone end these frauds. The Government appointed a Commission consisting of Forbes, Scott and Hannay to inquire into the cotton frauds of Dharwai. In their report, the Commission stated that the evils of Dharwar cotton trade were beyond the usual remedies, and nothing but energetic Government action could check so widespread an evil. With the report was submitted a draft of the Cotton Frauds Bill. This Bill with amendments was passed in April 1863, and became law in July as the Bombay Cotton Frauds Act IX of 1863. The first inspector appointed was Captain Hassard. In the midst of all these activities came the news of the American war, and with it a great rise in the value of cotton, so that even mixed and adulterated cotton found a market.²⁷ In Belgaum in 1860-61 the area

²⁴ "Belgaum Gazetteer," p. 264.

²⁵ Ibid

"In 1854-55 the experiments had been altogether discontinued. Experiments had been carried on but for ten years (1845-1855). The total cost appears to have been Rs.95,900 which, with receipts in India returned at Rs.16,460, leaves a net cost of Rs.79,460." (Gazetteer)

²⁶ "Since 1852 adulteration was as bad as ever. The coast dealers petitioned Government to pass an enactment to punish cotton frauds. They were helpless."—"Gazetteer," p. 263

²⁷ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 294

under New Orleans increased to 6,620 acres and local cotton to 278,963 acres.

The local price of Dharwar New Orleans rose from 140 the khandy in 1860 to Rs.380 in 1863 and to Rs.465 in 1864. Hence, every available patch was planted with cotton.²⁸ We can now realise how the price of grain rose due to cotton tillage encroaching on land so far devoted to grain cultivation. This prosperity, though a passing phase in the life of the Deccan agriculturist, lingered quite a few years even after the American war; a period long enough to give the Government, and more so the ryot, an idea that such flourishing conditions had come to stay for all time. "The flood of wealth turned the people's heads. They did not know what to do with their money. At village festivals, numbers of landlords appeared with carts the naves of whose wheels were rounded with bands of silver."²⁹ Between 1862 and 1871 came a great rise in the value of all field produce, especially of American Dharwar cotton, which alone in those ten years (1862-1871) enriched the district by Rs 8,15,00,000. Between 1862 and 1865 no less than Rs.4,70,00,000, or a yearly average of Rs.1,17,50,000, were amassed by the growers and dealers in Dharwar. In the midst of this wealth came the second revision of land assessment in some of the talukas settled thirty years ago by Wingate, and the Government anxious to share the prosperity raised its assessment to as high a level as possible.

Since 1828 repeated efforts had been made to improve the Dharwar cotton trade. Up to 1829 there was no regular cotton trade; a few hales were carried by the bunjaries to the Madras districts for the hand loom industries. Dirt on its way there reduced the value of cotton, especially of those bales which were shipped to Bombay. Much of this dirt was due to the difficulties of carriage. The cotton was thrown loosely into bags which were carried on bullocks, and had to be daily loaded and unloaded. In crossing streams the cotton was wetted, and, at the daily halt, the pack was often accidentally rolled into dust or mud. This damage did not cease when the cotton reached the coast. In the voyage to Bombay it suffered much from salt water, and till 1840 the Chief of Kolaba laid vexatious tolls on the shipped cargo.³¹ Not till

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Bom. Gov. Sel. No. CXLVIII, p. 104.

³⁰ The figures include alienated lands in government villages and native state lands mixed with government lands only for the Dharwar district.

³¹ "At this time Dharwar cotton moved on bullocks at one or two miles an hour. The bullocks were loaded and unloaded twice a day, generally near water where their packs were rolled in the mud. During the march each

1846 did native merchants ship cotton on their own account for so far, the Government alone had undertaken that risk. More than the risk was the cost of conveyance, for on every Rs.100 worth of cotton, at least Rs.60 for the carriage from the field to the ship were required. In 1847, the Bombay cotton trade so declined that Government appointed a Commission.³² Their important suggestion was that roads should be made fit for carts throughout Dharwar. It was this want of cheap and easy communications with the coast that had all along smothered the trade.

Mackay, we know, had reported that the cotton trade suffered due to the bad condition of the roads. In places with an easy outlet, the price of cotton was double, or treble its price than in a place where export was difficult, or impossible. In some places the cost of exporting it made the cultivation of cotton itself undesirable. In 1849, the survey officers estimated that in the whole of Belgaum, which at that time included a large area of the best cotton lands of south Bijapur, about 1,200,000 acres were suitable for cotton.

Before the opening of the Suez Canal much saw-ginned Dharwar cotton had been shipped to Liverpool, from whence it entered important Continental markets. The chief Continental ports which witnessed this saw-ginned Dharwar cotton were Cronstadt, Odessa, Revel, Trieste and Venice. Till 1847 cotton was carried to the coast on pack-bullocks, at a cost averaging Rs.6 for every bullock load of 250 lbs. In 1848, Townsend, the Revenue Commissioner, showed that the cost of carrying cotton from Belgaum to Bombay added from 17 to 20 per cent to its price. To add to this expense there were heavy freights between Bombay and England, which in 1847 was about £7 the ton. It was only in 1861 just a year before the American war, that the Dharwar Kumpta road was thrown open to cart traffic and with it the bullock carriage ceased.

The mulberry was introduced about 1823, when the first attempt was made to manufacture silk. The difficulty in silk culture was the want of mulberry leaves. In 1828, Baber was able to procure from the gardens of various people, both in Dharwar and Belgaum, sufficient mulberries to enable the silk breeders from Seringapatam, to raise several pounds of raw silk. The Collector expected that within a year,

bullock consoled himself by keeping his nose in his leader's pack eating the cotton. The loss in weight, which had not been made good by the dust was too often supplied by the water and mud at the journey's end."—"Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 363.

³² The members were Messrs. Glass, Spooner, Inverity, Bowman, Crawford, Smith, Murray, Karsetji, Jamsetji and Karsetji Kawasji, and later came in Mr. H. B. Frere.

his efforts would be crowned with such success as to encourage others to engage in the undertaking. Besides, these steps to encourage silk culture were taken by Baber with the hope of opening "fresh sources of industry to all classes, especially to numerous Mussalman families, who had no ostensible mode of gaining a livelihood," and who if encouraged, promised to engage in silk worm speculation; and when they did, they were to be given grants of certain quantity of raw silk.³³

In the April of 1826, the Collector of Dharwar requested Government sanction for the purchase of materials, for the erection of furnaces for the culture and preparation of raw silk.³⁴ A sum of Rs.786 already spent had been partly repaid from the sale of silk. Baber entertained hopes that all future expenditure would be saved by the labour of the convicts. In training the convicts, the services of two persons who were complete masters of the art of spinning and weaving after European fashion, were procured.³⁵ These experiments were also introduced with Baber's aid in Poona in the same year.³⁶ In October two carcoons, one in the jail and the other in the silk factory, were posted to conduct and supervise the work of the silk and indigo manufactures. The flying shuttle worked by two Glasgow weavers had excited the interest of the native weavers, crowds of whom daily visited the factory and were in constant attendance³⁷.

At the end of that year (1826), Government requested the warehouse keeper to place the specimens of Dharwar silk before qualified natives, for their opinion on the quality of the stuff produced.³⁸ On careful examination it was reported that two skeins of silk were of such good quality, that they could almost equal the second rate silk from China. They estimated its value at Rs.10½ per pukka seer. Two more skeins of the same species were also of good quality, or even better than the third rate silk from China. It was estimated at about Rs.10 per pukka seer. In spite of its decent quality, the report observed that those samples could not form a consignment for the English market.³⁹

The efforts continued with such success, that in 1827 a package of Dharwar silk was sent to England. Unfortunately it did not reach its

³³ Letter No. 1403 of March 9, 1826.

³⁴ Letter No. 1434 of April 4, 1826.

³⁵ Letter No. 1448 of April 13, 1826.

³⁶ Letter No. 1474 of May 10, 1826.

³⁷ Letter of Oct. 30, 1826.

³⁸ Letter of Nov. 14, 1826.

³⁹ Letter of Nov. 20, 1826.

destination because the ship was wrecked. Had the silk reached the market it would have sold at the rate of 12 shillings a pound. In 1833, Dr. Lush reported, that the people who possessed silk worms had about one or two acres under mulberry. The value of their produce at the Hubli market was Rs 3½ or Rs.4 the seer.⁴⁰

In 1842 about 400 lbs. of very inferior silk was made. In 1843, Dharwar had 200 mulberry trees and 25,000 bushes besides 10,820 more in the jail garden. About 272 lbs. of silk worth Rs.500 were made by the people, and 144 lbs. worth Rs.360 were made by the convicts. This progress would undoubtedly have increased with an encouragement for its export and acceptance at foreign markets, especially England. There is evidence to show that, on the contrary, the export of silk from India to England after 1831-32, had progressively fallen from 92 lacs of rupees to 54 lacs of rupees.*

In spite of some sign of improvement of silk culture at Dharwar, suddenly in 1848 the attempt to grow mulberry, with a view to establishing a silk industry, was stopped. In 1865, we learn that efforts were made once again under Dr. Mackenzie to revive the silk industry.⁴¹ The industry never grew in the years that followed but met the fate of all half-hearted enterprises.

Side by side with the efforts in silk culture, indigo was also produced. In 1826 the indigo seed was procured from Cuddapa, and the plantation in the very first year yielded upwards of a maund of dye, wholly by the efforts of the convicts. Baber wrote that the quality was inferior, but that was due more to want of skill in the manufacture than in the plant itself, which in the opinion of competent judges would thrive in the Bombay Karnatak, as well as where it was indigenous. The success of indigo manufacture like silk, observed Baber, lay in the encouragement the Government could give the ryot.⁴² All along 1826, as much effort as was given to silk culture was also devoted to the improvement of indigo. It was found that indigo could be manufactured in the western talukas of Dharwar from several wild plants, discovered in great abundance all over that part of the Collectorate. Very little expense was required in its manufacture, as wood, the chief article, was plentiful wherever the plant was indigenous. Some of the indigo specimens were pronounced by competent judges to be equal to the indigo

⁴⁰ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 372.

* Report From the Select Committee, 1840, p. 129.

⁴¹ "Dharwar Gazetteer," p. 372.

⁴² Letter No. 1403 of March 9, 1826.

manufactured by European agency.⁴³ The Government had called for competent opinions from the warehouse keeper on indigo along with silk.⁴⁴ The specimens were divided by the judges into three classes. The first quality in their estimation was fit for the European market and could be valued at Rs.125 per Surat maund. The second and third qualities were estimated at Rs.40 and Rs.10 per Surat maund respectively. In closing their report the judges, however, concluded that even the first rate indigo of Dharwar compared poorly with that of Bengal.⁴⁵ Beyond this very early (1826) activity in indigo manufacture, and its possibilities in Dharwar, there is no further evidence of its future progress. It must have gone the way of all pious wishes of our early administrators. Cotton, silk and indigo were all looked upon as industries with a future by the first of our collectors, but those at the head of affairs knew how far these were to be exploited for the gain of their home markets.

EPILOGUE

WE HAVE thus before us the economic history of the first fifty years of British rule in the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak. Our narrative of the period 1818 to 1868 can be distinctly divided into two halves: the first period of twenty-five years before the advent of the new survey may be definitely called the period of occupation and peaceful settlement; the remaining years those of experimentation and of bold effort to improve upon the past.

With regard to the British occupation of Maharashtra and Carnatic, the political acumen and ability of those early administrators enabled them within a short time to establish law and order in the lands beyond the ghauts. Whatever the early arrogant attitude of the conquerors, it must be said in justice that those who were at the helm of affairs never lost an opportunity to control their subordinates and the newly arrived from England. Their wise precepts of persuasion, tolerance, and a genuine desire to learn as much as they could of their new acquisition, soon enabled them to establish their control in this mountainous part of the sub-continent of India, and all within a couple of months of its conquest.

With the territory under complete subjection, the former ruling class won over by liberal promises of generous treatment and the ryot

⁴³ Letter of Oct. 30, 1826.

⁴⁴ Letter of Nov. 14, 1826.

⁴⁵ Letter of Nov. 22, 1826.

given a peaceful and orderly Government, the conquerors soon found time to turn their attention to the settlement of the disordered economic conditions of their charge. It was to the history of this economic settlement that we have devoted our labours, with special emphasis on the early period of transition from the Maratha to the British rule.

It cannot be denied that the early years of the Company's rule were the darkest in the economic history of the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak. The difficulties which faced those able and industrious workers, like Pottinger, Briggs, Grant Duff, Robertson, Thackeray, Chaplin and quite a host of others, were so divergent and manifold that we cannot but admire the patience with which they manfully struggled on to lay the foundations of their new administration, in surroundings so strange in language, culture and outlook. It is seldom, if ever, we might say, that history records the names of men who have silently laboured and accomplished tasks far more difficult than the winning of a battle. History does homage to Elphinstone as a politician and an able historian, but seldom, if ever, as an administrator; Briggs and Grant Duff are immortal historians, but the world knows little of their silent hours of industry and colossal labour in a *cutcherry*, with a host of documents, struggling to lay the basis of a new administration; Chaplin, Pottinger, Thackeray, Robertson and a good many other noble Englishmen remain forgotten, for who has cared to peep through those innumerable dusty records of their noble and tireless work, both for their country and for those over whom destiny had sent them to preside?

Not only were they faced by a strange language and a strange people, but the past twenty-three years of Maratha administration had seen a marked ebb in the work of practically every department of the Peshwa's dominions. The confused state in which the records were found on the collapse of the Peshwa's Government, gave no basis for the establishment of a new order, or even the faithful continuance of the old. The result of this darkness was a groping toward a new order of things. Blunders, but not lack of sympathy, followed in the wake of mounting difficulties, and putting at times the commercial interests of the Company before those of the ryots brought in its train ruin, poverty and economic depression. The difficulties of these early years have been amply narrated so as to leave no doubt in the reader's mind that a heavy land-tax was undoubtedly one of the main reasons for increasing poverty. The unemployed made the burden on land heavier with an increase in tillage area, followed by a greater output of grain, which, in

turn, brought about a fall in prices.¹ The assessment fixed upon the old Kumal standard of the best days of the Maratha administration, accompanied by falling prices of agricultural produce, and the Government assessment no longer payable in grain but in money whose value had also risen with the stoppage of gold and silver (formerly brought in by the marauding Marathas), all made existence for the ryot very difficult. With the gradual disappearance of cotton weaving as an industry by the capture of the markets by English goods, the one additional source of income besides agriculture was also closed. All these, and several other factors combined to make a stupendous problem until, in 1835, abject misery, deserted villages, and above all a falling revenue induced the Government to experiment with a new land settlement. Such was the condition of the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak when entrusted to the charge of Goldsmid and Wingate in 1838.

The remaining years of this history (1838-1868) was a period for new experiments and colossal effort to improve upon the past. The introduction of a new land settlement; the enactment of new laws and regulations; an improvement on the past mode of revenue collection; and an added impetus to the growth and culture of cotton were the several steps taken to better the condition of the Collectorates. Things appeared to be quite hopeful from 1838, and an added impetus, by an increasing demand for cotton from 1859 onwards, improved the monetary condition of the ryot.

These sudden changes from abject misery to a tolerably decent condition of life were accompanied with a great flow of wealth during the sixties of the last century, when the Karnatak began to reap a rich harvest from the American war; and the Government felt that it ought to share in some of this wealth and prosperity. Circumstances favoured the authorities, when just in the seventies of the last century, the revision settlement, especially in the Poona district, was about to begin. Taking

¹ "It is unnecessary for me to enlarge in this place on the causes that have led to this posture of things which may, in a few words be stated to spring from the same source that has induced similar results throughout Europe, that is, a state of peace which has reduced the consumption whilst the produce has increased most rapidly.

"To demonstrate this I may remark that in this Collectorship alone nearly 500,000 begahs of ground have been brought into cultivation and the grain produced by them would feed at the moderate computation 30,000 men and 15,000 horses, but instead of having an increase in the "consumers" to that extent we may safely calculate that there is a decrease of half the number of men and the whole of the horses. How far this estimate is to be applied generally throughout the country is out of my power to say, but I suspect the inferences to be drawn from it are the same in all quarters." (Pottinger, Collector of Ahmednagar.) Letter No. 1475 of 31st August, 1822.

advantage of this opportunity, the Government raised its assessments as high as possible in nearly every taluka that came in for a revised land settlement.

Considering the prosperity of the sixties, the Deccan Riot Commission of 1875 reported that "the monthly wages of a common coolie... rose from Rs.7-12-0 in the period of 1860-62 to Rs.13-8-0 in 1863. During the construction of the railway, about 25 lacs of rupees were spent... in payment. Outside the district itself... the works on the Bhor Ghauts gave employment to thousands.... Following on this after a short interval came an increased expenditure on public works, rising in 1868-69 to about 31 lacs on public works and irrigation in Poona alone. Through the immense stimulus given to the production of cotton, and the cheapness of money, agricultural produce and land had attained an extravagant value, and the ryot's powers as a borrower were those of a capitalist rather than a borrower."²

All these causes of prosperity were ephemeral and transitory, especially in the Bombay Deccan, for deep down lay an increasing indebtedness which fell upon the ryot with increased violence, no sooner had the causes of prosperity passed away. "With the close of the American war in 1865, the flow of capital into the country ceased. Prices of produce did not fall immediately, however, but the season of 1866-67 was one of severe drought, and that of 1867-68 of partial failure, and the effect of contracting credit following the stoppage of flow of capital began to be felt in 1868. Prices quickly fell after 1870-71." It would be absurd to expect such transitory cycles of prosperity to continue for an indefinite period, but it is only during such years that the ryot must make the most of their opportunities. If within a couple of years the ryot feel the pinch of poverty again, as they began to do in the Deccan, then there are only two conclusions that we may arrive at, and those are that the ryot's share of the wealth in those years (1863-65) must have been very meagre, or his ignorance did not enable him to utilise his gains for any lasting benefit. The result of the good years was to leave the peasantry, due to their ignorance and even improvidence, at times deeply in debt. The Riot Commission, after an investigation in some twelve villages, reported that one-third of the occupants were in debt, and the average debt per occupant amounted to Rs.371.⁴

² Deccan Riot Commission Report, 1875, pp. 24, 25

³ Ibd.

⁴ "Indian Journal of Social Work, 1940," p. 325.

Whatever the future, the immediate reaction in agricultural prosperity, under the light assessment from 1838 onwards, was as rapid as the decline of the districts had been in the past. The new principles of assessment and revenue administration, worked out by such able and distinguished officers, approved themselves by their results. Large tracts of land lying waste were brought under the plough. Population and agricultural capital increased steadily. The country was supplied with roads in place of the tedious, wasteful carriage of pack-bullocks along the jungle tracks. The railway construction brought a temporary monetary gain to labour. Prices of produce and wages increased, not to forget the assessment also, and remissions became unknown.

This general improvement spread to nearly every part of the Bombay Deccan and Karnatak. The trend of events like the American war favoured the betterment of the agriculturist's condition, and these improvements, though not of a lasting nature (except those regarding communications) were based upon years of experience, and better learned by those who were entrusted with the destiny of the lands beyond the ghauts in the years that followed 1838.

At least, in the Bombay Deccan, the Riot Commission revealed that the harvest of the thirty years ending in 1868 was not as plentiful as was expected by the architects of those improvements of 1838. Many faults still remained, but in justice to their efforts it cannot be denied that quite a good many of them were the outcome of the ignorant and superstitious peasants themselves. The disappointments that followed 1838 cannot be laid to a complete lack of foresight, better understanding and faulty administration on the part of those to whom destiny in 1838 entrusted the fortunes of those thousands of villages in a western corner of the great sub-continent of India.

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Letter No. 204 of 13th Sept., 1818	Letter No. 1345 of 19th April, 1823
Letter No 223 of 29th Sept., 1818	Letter No. 1748 of 18th June, 1823.
Letter No. 236 of 6th Oct., 1818.	Letter No. 7206 of 30th Oct., 1823
Letter No. 348 of 9th Jan., 1819.	Letter No. 1485 of 26th Nov., 1823
Letter No. 389 of 6th Feb., 1819	Letter No. 1944 of 1st Feb., 1824
Letter No. 466 of 11th May, 1819	Letter No. 7679 of 5th Feb., 1824.
Letter No. 520 of 8th June, 1819.	Letter No. 1963 of 19th Feb., 1824
Letter No. 253 of 27th June, 1819	Letter No. 2246 of 13th March, 1824.
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Letter No. 584 of 24th Aug., 1819.	Letter No. 7944 of 6th June, 1824.
Letter No. 726 of 11th March, 1820	Letter No. 2009 of 9th June, 1824
Letter No. 778 of 14th April, 1820	Letter No. 1755 of 11th June, 1824.
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Letter No. 2208 of 8th Feb., 1825.	Letter No. 2398 of 25th Jan., 1826.
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Letter No. 225 of 25th Jan., 1819.	Letter No. 5504 of 22nd Aug., 1822.
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Letter No. 331 of 23rd Jan., 1820.	Letter No. 3614 of 10th Sept., 1822.
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Letter No. 205 of 14th Sept., 1818.	Letter No. 6438 of 22nd April, 1823.
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Letter No. 863 of 13th June, 1820.	Letter No. 1909 of 25th Feb., 1824.
Letter No. 3218 of 17th Nov., 1820.	Letter No. 7743 of 4th March, 1824.
Letter No. 1102 of 13th Nov., 1821.	Letter No. 7775 of 12th March, 1824.
Letter No. 1166 of 15th Dec., 1821.	Letter No. 2056 of 5th May, 1824.
Letter No. 1321 of 18th Jan., 1822.	Letter No. 1270 of 30th Sept., 1824.
Letter No. 1327 of 25th April,	Letter No. 8420 of 24th Dec., 1824.
Letter No. 1513 of 5th Oct., 1822.	Letter No. 2328 of 25th April, 1825.
Letter No. 1334 of 5th April, 1823.	Letter No. 1944 of 3rd April, 1826.

BOMBAY KARNATAK

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Letter No. 800 of 27th Oct., 1823.	Letter No. 1191 of 16th Aug., 1825.
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Letter No. 914 of 13th Aug., 1824.	Letter No. 1388 of 2nd March, 1826.

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III COINAGE, EXCHANGE AND MINTS

Letter No. 161 of 20th March, 1820.	Letter No. 281 of 31st Jan., 1821.
Letter No. 220 of 20th Sept., 1820.	Letter No. 336 of 14th May, 1821.
Letter No. 230 of 7th Oct., 1820.	Letter No. 341 of 22nd May, 1821.
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Letter No. 253 of 24th Nov., 1820.	

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V COTTON, SILK AND INDIGO

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Letter No. 557 of 6th July, 1822.	Letter No. 9863 of 14th Jan., 1826.
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Letter No. 5459 of 15th July, 1822.	Letter No. 1137 of 6th April, 1826.
Letter No. 1424 of 16th July, 1822.	Letter No. 1449 of 13th April, 1826.
Letter No. 1246 of 20th Sept., 1822.	

C. DOCUMENTS FROM THE LAND RECORDS OFFICE

LETTERS, REPORTS, GOVERNMENT RESOLUTIONS, ETC.,
(BOMBAY DECCAN AND KARNATAK)

FILE NO. 2

Letter No. 311 of 4th Feb., 1851.
 Letter No. 117 of 24th March, 1851.
 Letter No. 1822 of 17th July, 1852.
 Letter No. 462 of 30th July, 1853.
 Letter No. 694 of 7th Sept., 1853.
 Letter No. 1 of 22nd Aug., 1855.
 Letter No. 2 of 18th Oct., 1858.

FILE NO. 19.

Report No. 111 of 1836.
 Report No. 56 of 1836.
 Report No. 101 of 1837.
 Report No. 15 of 1840.
 Report No. 162 of 1840.
 Report No. 22 of 1841.
 Report No. 230 of 1842.
 Report No. 2664 of 1843.
 Report No. 1881 of 1843.
 Report No. 2179 of 1844.
 Report No. 1491 of 1846.
 Report No. 2168 of 1846.
 Report No. 46 of 1847.
 Report No. 2682 of 1847.
 Report No. 2628 of 1848.

FILE NO. 3.

Letter No. 235 of 29th April, 1861.

FILE NO. 4.

Letter No. 7288 of 18th Dec., 1849.
 Letter No. 272 of 11th Aug., 1852.
 Letter No. 3965 of 8th July, 1853.
 Letter No. 1915 of 28th May, 1860.
 Letter No. 930 of 11th Oct., 1861.
 Letter No. 2189 of 23rd May, 1865.
 Report No. 560 of 1869.
 Letter No. 3146 of 31st May, 1863.

FILE NO. 20.

Letter No. 39 of 4th Jan., 1848.
 Report No. 25 of 1848.

FILE NO. 14.

Letter No. 63 of 5th Aug., 1846.
 Letter of 23rd Oct., 1846.
 Letter of 13th Nov., 1846.
 Letter No. 245 of 5th Feb., 1847.
 Letter No. 3865 of 4th Oct., 1847.
 Report of 25th Nov., 1848.
 Letter No. 3758 of 2nd Oct., 1849.
 Letter No. 225 of 12th Nov., 1849.
 Letter No. 7214 of 6th Dec., 1849.
 Letter No. 151 of 6th May, 1853.

Letter No. 55 of 26th Jan., 1859.

FILE NO. 9.

Letter No. 960 of 16th Oct., 1847.
 Letter No. 503 of 28th July, 1849.
 Letter No. 36 of 20th Jan., 1851.
 Letter No. 448 of 21st Sept., 1855.
 Letter No. 224 of 2nd May, 1856.
 Letter No. 1613 of 20th May, 1856.

Letter No. 2844 of 11th Sept. 1857
 Letter No. 4915 of 13th Nov. 1857
 Letter No. 199 of 18th Jan. 1858

File No. 39.

Letter No. 1799 of 2nd June 1841
 Letter No. 160 of 1st Sept. 1841
 Letter No. 198 of 9th Nov. 1841
 Letter No. 1633 of 22nd Nov. 1841
 Letter No. 3749 of 7th Dec. 1841
 Letter No. 2372 of 3rd Sept. 1842
 Letter No. 1546 of 31st Oct. 1842
 Letter No. 730 of 3rd June 1844
 Letter No. 2395 of 25th July 1844
 Report No. 2194 of 1844
 Letter No. 114 of 17th April. 1845
 Letter No. 602 of 30th April. 1845
 Letter No. 1277 of 3rd Sept. 1845
 Letter No. 558 of 9th Oct. 1845

File No. 2.

Letter No. 33 of 8th Feb., 1847
 Letter No. 183 of 8th Feb. 1847
 Letter No. 73 of 6th April. 1848
 Letter No. 3047 of 28th May. 1848
 Letter No. 22 of 19th Feb. 1849
 Letter No. 33 of 28th May 1849

File No. 23.

Letter of 14th Oct. 1842
 Report No. 775 of 1813
 Letter No. 929 of 28th March 1843
 Report No. 27 of 1813
 Letter No. 1338 of 9th Dec., 1843
 Letter No. 1339 of 30th April. 1844
 Letter No. 35 of 23rd Nov. 1844
 Letter of 5th March 1845
 Letter No. 724 of 21st May 1845
 Letter No. 3701 of 29th July 1845
 Letter of 31st July 1845.
 Letter No. 36 of 28th Oct. 1845
 Letter No. 47 of 29th Nov. 1845
 Letter of 23rd Nov. 1847
 Letter of 24th Nov. 1847

File No. 1.

Report No. 212 of 1855.
 Report No. 147 of 1856
 Report No. 187 of 1858
 Report No. 165 of 1859
 Report No. 200 of 1860

File No. 6.

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 Letter No. 544 of 31st Dec. 1862
 Report No. 36 of 26th Jan.. 1864
 Survey Report No. 129 of 21st May. 1865
 Survey Report No. 151 of 25th May. 1865

Letter of 8th Nov. 1845
 Letter No. 20th Nov. 1845
 Letter No. 467 of 12th March 1846
 Letter of 26th March. 1847
 Letter No. 2705 of 14th July. 1847
 Report No. 195 of 1857

File No. 41.

Letter No. 955 of 13th April. 1858
 Letter No. 158 of 30th April. 1858
 Letter No. 175 of 6th May. 1858
 Letter No. 1175 of 6th May. 1858
 Govt Resolution of 6th May. 1858
 Letter No. 793 of 16th July. 1858.
 Letter No. 578 of 20th July. 1858
 Letter No. 1581 of 24th July. 1858
 Letter No. 945 of 29th July. 1855
 Letter No. 305 of 12th Aug. 1858

File No. 23.

Letter No. 38 of 6th Dec., 1847.
 Letter of 10th Dec., 1847
 Report No. 483 of 1848.
 Letter No. 24 of 10th March. 1848
 Letter No. 85 of 31st July. 1849
 Letter No. 5614 of 14th Sept. 1849
 Letter No. 1353 of 29th Nov., 1849
 Letter No. 5186 of 4th July 1850

File No. 26.

Report No. 4249 of 1847
 Letter No. 88 of 31st July 1849
 Letter No. 35 of 17th Dec. 1851
 Letter No. 165 of 23rd Oct. 1852

File No. 44.

Letter No. 31 of 18th Oct. 1844
 Letter No. 1751 of 31st Dec. 1844
 Letter No. 69 of 28th Nov. 1846
 Letter No. 4465 of 10th Nov. 1847
 Letter No. 73 of 6th May. 1848
 Letter No. 122 of 7th June. 1848.
 Letter No. 215 of 20th Nov. 1848
 Letter No. 11 of 30th Jan. 1849.

File No. 22.

Survey Report No. 286 of 31st Aug. 1851
 Report No. 212 of 11th Aug. 1855
 Report No. 212 of 14th Aug. 1855
 Report No. 157 of 9th Aug. 1856
 Letter of 12th Dec., 1859
 Letter No. 19 of 12th Jan., 1860
 Govt Resolution No. 395 of 28th Jan. 1860
 Govt. Resolution of 6th Feb. 1860
 Letter of 1st Sept. 1860.
 Letter No. 149 of 25th Jan.. 1861
 Letter No. 11 of 25th Feb., 1861
 Survey Report No. 190 of 31st Oct. 1861

File No. 22

Despatch No. 29 of 15th Aug., 1863
 Letter No. 867 of 21st Feb., 1866
 Memo No. 2017 of 17th April, 1866

File No. 30.

Letter No. 638 of 12th Feb., 1849.
 Letter No. 104 of 3rd July, 1849
 Letter No. 997 of 5th July, 1849
 Letter No. 3231 of 27th July, 1849
 Letter No. 5068 of 16th Aug., 1849
 Letter No. 419 of 29th Oct., 1851.
 Report No. 8028 of 1852.
 Letter No. 50 of 6th June, 1852
 Letter of 14th Oct., 1852.
 Letter No. 281 of 13th Nov., 1852
 Letter No. 942 of 28th Dec., 1852.
 Report No. 353 of 1853
 Letter No. 57 of 7th Feb., 1853.

File No. 132.

Report No. 49 of 1853
 Govt Resolution No. 1610 of 1853
 Letter No. 93 of 3rd March, 1856.
 Letter of 29th June, 1855.
 Letter of 18th July, 1859.
 Letter No. 1683 of 19th July, 1861
 Letter No. 201 of 28th Jan., 1862.

File No. 45.

Report of 28th Sept., 1842
 Report of 31st Aug., 1843
 Letter No. 194 of 24th July, 1844
 Report of 24th Sept., 1844
 Letter No. 4031 of 19th Nov., 1844
 Letter No. 85 of 11th April, 1846
 Letter No. 2131 of 28th April, 1846
 Letter No. 23 of 25th Nov., 1846,
 (from the Court of Directors)
 Letter No. 5 of 18th Feb., 1846,
 (from the Court of Directors)
 Letter No. 338 of 29th Dec., 1856
 Report of 28th Nov., 1857
 Letter No. 384 of 17th Nov., 1857

File No. 52.

Report of 19th May, 1852
 Letter No. 3192 of 1852
 Letter No. 17 of 8th Jan., 1853
 Letter of 2nd Feb., 1856
 Report of 11th Oct., 1856
 Letter No. 1090 of 20th Nov., 1857
 Report No. 2463 of 1865
 Govt Resolution No. 1829 of 18th
 May, 1866
 Report No. 535 of 1867
 Memo No. 495 of 30th April, 1868
 Report of 2nd May, 1868
 Govt Resolution of 2nd June, 1868

Miscellaneous

Despatch No. 10 of 30th May, 1844
 Letter No. 4989 of 15th Aug., 1849
 Letter No. 2080 of 12th Aug., 1851
 Letter No. 1064 of 11th Nov., 1851
 Letter No. 769 of 11th Dec., 1851
 Letter No. 20 of 14th Jan., 1852
 Letter No. 614 of 27th Jan., 1852.
 Letter No. 3265 of 28th July, 1852
 Letter No. 3391 of 4th Aug., 1852.
 Letter No. 540 of 6th Aug., 1852
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 Sept., 1852
 Report of 3rd Oct., 1852
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(Bombay Deccan and Karnatak)

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INDEX

Abohona, 170
 Afghanistan, 16
 Ahmednagar, 28, 29, 31, 37, 41, 45, 50
 55, 131, 132, 134, 156, 157, 161, 164
 165, 170, 183, 186, 193, 198, 206, 207
 219, 221, 229, 230, 307, 316, 334
 Amubhair, 175, 177
 Anagundi, 232, 335
 Anderon, Mr., 105, 106, 107, 113, 114
 132, 313, 331, 347
 Andrews, Mr., 31
 Ankola, 160, 161, 162, 329
 Annigeri, 238
 Athni, 139, 146, 237, 247, 251, 252
 310, 314, 317, 330, 336
 Badami, 234, 235, 237, 239, 241, 247,
 249, 250, 254, 273, 274, 275, 276, 283
 300, 305, 309, 312, 317, 331, 337
 Baglan, 48, 49, 170
 Bagulkote, 146, 245, 247, 239, 217, 219
 250, 253, 254, 255, 273, 275, 292, 293,
 305, 306, 307, 310, 311, 312, 313,
 317, 331, 332, 334, 336, 337, 338
 Bahadurpur, 177
 Baheri Venkappa, 239
 Bajpur, 139, 140, 142, 143, 146, 147,
 148, 151, 267, 294, 330
 Baji Row, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 22,
 36, 45, 234, 238, 261, 306
 Bankapur, 241, 242, 243, 244, 274, 276
 314, 315
 Baramat, 126, 127, 128, 129, 153
 Barlow Sir John, 14, 15
 Baroda, 19, 20
 Barsi, 28, 135, 146, 151, 164, 220, 221
 Bassam, Treaty of, 11, 12, 14, 18
 Bedi, 237, 247, 248, 272, 273, 310, 314,
 317
 Belgaum, 107, 133, 151, 234, 235, 237,
 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 247, 248,
 253, 267, 292, 293, 297, 300, 305, 306,
 308, 309, 310, 311, 313, 314, 315, 316,
 317, 322, 325, 326, 329, 331, 332, 333,
 334, 335, 338, 341, 346, 347, 348, 350
 Bennihalla, 240, 241, 244
 Bhewndy, 176
 Bhima, 29, 56, 136, 199, 221
 Bhimathadi, 27, 92, 121, 123, 124, 125,
 129
 Bomhat, 40, 50, 51, 55, 58, 108, 161,
 164, 175, 191, 197, 211, 223, 290, 293,
 305, 311, 312, 313, 342, 349
 Briggs, Mr., 26, 32, 33, 34, 36, 45, 46, 48,
 49, 50, 58, 59, 354
 Bruce, Mr., 42
 Buckle, Lieut., 206, 207
 Buddangudd, 240
 Bundoji Govind, 20
 Bumjaries, 23, 35, 51, 169, 176
 Campbell, Mr., 206
 Cannon, George, 233
 Chandote, 31, 37, 167, 168, 169
 Chaplin, Mr., 27, 31, 38, 39, 43, 46, 69,
 70, 82, 88, 116, 180, 181, 182, 183,
 184, 185, 186, 187, 190, 193, 194, 213,
 228, 229, 235, 237, 259, 261, 262, 263,
 265, 266, 268, 272, 273, 274, 279, 294,
 295, 328, 354
 Chikodi, 237, 247, 250, 275, 310, 311
 Chopra, 175, 177
 Colebrooke, Mr., 17, 18, 21
 Comorin, Cape, 23
 Cornwallis, Lord, 11
 Cowper, Capt., 102, 103, 104, 105, 106
 Crawford, Mr., 31, 38, 56
 Cumpta, 23, 150, 257, 288, 309, 311,
 320, 331, 332
 Dambar, 212, 241, 245, 253, 273, 275
 276, 309, 316, 314
 Dangla, Trimbakji, 18, 20, 21
 Davidson, Lieut., 94, 140, 163, 167
 Day, Henry, 117, 130, 131, 168
 Deccan, 16, 19, 23, 25, 30, 34, 38, 41
 47, 50, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 61, 64
 67, 71, 73, 74, 82, 88, 90, 107, 108,
 116, 120, 122, 127, 137, 141, 156, 160,
 169, 174, 176, 179, 183, 192, 194, 195
 200, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211,
 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218, 227, 229,
 246, 260, 334, 349, 356
 Dharmia, 241, 243, 244
 Dharwar, 56, 75, 107, 181, 234, 235, 237
 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 245, 247,
 252, 253, 254, 266, 267, 269, 272, 273,
 274, 275, 276, 277, 283, 285, 290, 291
 292, 293, 300, 304, 308, 309, 310, 311
 314, 315, 316, 317, 322, 325, 326, 329,
 331, 332, 334, 335, 341, 343, 344, 345,
 348, 349, 350, 352, 353
 Dhulim, 177, 178, 194
 Dunlop, Mr., 29, 228, 237, 276
 Elphinstone, Mr., 10, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21
 23, 24, 38, 44, 53, 60, 61, 64, 69, 87,
 88, 114, 180, 181, 182, 183, 186, 187,
 188, 189, 190, 213, 218, 229, 233, 235,
 236, 258, 263, 266, 279, 322, 354
 Eurnondole, 175, 225
 Erskine, Mr., 170
 Evans, Mr., 127, 128
 Fife, Colonel, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210,
 211, 339
 Francis, Colonel, 28, 81, 131, 211
 Furnavis, Nana, 11, 26, 45, 84, 85, 86,
 88

Gatprabha, 238, 245, 246, 249, 250, 251
272, 332, 337, 338

Godavari, 29

Gokak, 237, 246, 247, 249, 250, 252, 305
309, 311, 312, 330, 338

Goldsmid, Mr., 28, 94, 108, 167, 203
205, 322, 323, 355

Grant, Mr., 26, 30, 39, 186, 354

Gykwai, Bhugwant, 20

Hangal, 242, 243, 244, 274, 276, 283,
290, 309, 316

Hastings, Lord, 18

Haveli, 121, 122, 126

Hippargi, 135, 139, 247

Hirehalli, 241

Honavada, 238

Hubli, 147, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245,
257, 273, 276, 305, 309, 310, 311, 314,
315, 323, 331, 332, 333, 334, 345

Hungund, 237, 239, 241, 247, 249, 250,
273, 274, 284, 313, 331

Hurukasti, 250, 251

Indapur, 28, 92, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125,
126, 127, 129, 131, 139, 152, 211, 220

Indi, 135, 136, 137, 138, 237, 247, 249

Islamapur, 115, 222

Inverity, Mr., 132, 143, 338, 339

Jamkhed, 164, 183

Jaoh, 142, 143, 144, 149, 151, 153, 154

Jaykeda, 170

Jumikhundi, 146

Jumner, 27, 28, 92, 121

Kalas, 121

Kappatgudd, 240, 256, 257

Karr, Seton, 238

Kattao, 142, 144, 149

Kennedy, Capt., 153

Khandesh, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 45, 46,
48, 49, 52, 115, 120, 161, 168, 170, 172,
173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181,
191, 197, 205, 208, 210, 211, 219, 223,
224, 225, 226, 277, 281

Khamapur, 112, 144, 149, 150, 151, 153
283

Khed, 27, 92

Kode, 241, 242, 243, 270, 272, 274, 276,
314, 316, 318

Kolhapur, 180, 222, 238, 240, 245, 325
326, 330, 331, 333, 334, 338

Kopergaon, 38, 194, 198

Koregaon, 142, 143, 144, 150, 153

Kotiyad, 139

Krishnna, 115, 139, 152, 235, 238, 241,
245, 249, 250, 251, 252, 254, 272, 336,
337, 339

Kumudavati, 241

Kurkaumba, 127, 195

Kurmalla, 30, 37, 52, 135, 139

Kurrar, 142, 148, 151, 199, 222

Lohana, 177

Lester, General, 239

Madha, 135, 199

Maharashtra, 15, 16, 23, 25, 26, 28, 33,
35, 60, 61, 67, 69, 76, 88, 91, 192,
194, 199, 258, 266, 271, 275, 276, 278,
288, 326, 353

Malcolm, Sir John, 15, 18, 21, 23, 239

Malegaon, 170, 197

Malingpur, 139, 146

Malprabha, 238, 240, 244, 245, 246, 247,
248, 249, 250, 253, 254, 255, 256, 272,
332, 337

Mansheld, Mr., 28, 121

Meritch, 138, 145, 240, 282, 305, 311,
330

Mhawul 29

Mill, Mr., 28, 71, 82

Minto, Lord, 15, 16

Misrikota, 242, 245, 273, 276, 309, 311

Mohole, 30, 121, 135

Mongoli, 139, 270

Munddebihat, 135, 139, 237, 247

Mulgund Mahal, 212, 245, 314

Munro, Sir Thomas, 16, 233, 244, 245,
246, 247, 258, 262, 263, 266, 287, 321

Nash, Mr., 125, 140

Nasik, 29, 31, 37, 38, 50, 57, 58, 96, 162,
164, 168, 169, 170, 191, 197, 198, 201,
206, 207, 230

Naxalgund, 241, 242, 244, 274, 275, 276,
303, 315, 323, 331, 340, 344

Nevasa, 158, 164

Nira, 127, 207

Nunderbad, 177

Nurgund, 238, 242, 245, 253, 309, 311

Nussarabad, 175, 225

Pabal, 27, 92, 121, 122, 124, 126

Padshapuri, 237, 247, 248, 272, 274, 283,
284, 297, 305, 317

Patavasgurh, 237, 247, 248, 249, 250, 273,
275, 284, 311, 330, 337, 344

Patwardhan, 30, 114, 144, 238

Penny, Mr., 206, 207

Poona, 28, 29, 40, 45, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57,
60, 80, 84, 90, 92, 93, 96, 121, 124,
124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 134, 135,
138, 164, 165, 169, 181, 194, 195, 196,
198, 199, 201, 207, 208, 214, 215, 218,
219, 224, 228, 285, 305, 312, 313, 316,
325, 326, 332, 334, 355

Pottinger, Mr., 37, 41, 43, 44, 45, 48,
50, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 183, 193, 194,
221, 229, 334

Pringle, Mr., 27, 28, 29, 30, 71, 72, 82,
90, 91, 92, 93, 140

Punchayet, 259

Pundeipuri, 40, 142, 151, 152, 198, 314

Purandhar, 27, 92, 121, 126, 128

Rahui, 163, 164

Ranibednore, 242, 243, 244, 270, 272,
273, 276, 285, 290, 310, 314, 344

Ratnagiri, 154, 320

Ritchie, Mr., 214

Robertson, Mr., 24, 27, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 51, 52, 71, 89, 183, 184, 194, 196, 228, 354
 Ropala, 135
 Ron, 241, 272, 310, 328
Sampgaoon, 237, 247, 248, 249, 300, 311, 317, 346
 Sanghi, 145, 154, 282, 311
 Sastry, Gangadhar, 19, 20
 Sattara, 30, 31, 40, 89, 139, 140, 143, 144, 150, 153, 154, 198, 199, 206, 212, 222, 234, 249, 325
 Savantwadi, 238
 Shirla, 177
 Shrivagaon, 164, 165
 Sholapur, 29, 30, 55, 56, 72, 75, 98, 121, 127, 133, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140, 142, 147, 148, 149, 151, 195, 199, 201, 207, 218, 219, 220, 221, 226, 234, 237, 238, 239, 247, 249, 250, 288, 311, 312, 313, 316, 326, 331
 Shore, Sir John, 11
 Sinda, Daulatrao, 14
 Simur, 167, 168, 169, 170
 Saur, 54
 Sowda, 48, 49
 Sultanpur, 33
 Supa, 121, 126, 127, 128
 Syhadri, 142, 178, 199, 240, 241, 245
Tadas, 242, 243, 244, 314, 334
 Tapti, 23, 175
Uhtoff, Mr., 10
Varda, 241, 242, 243, 244, 265, 266
 Varsi, 177
 Vibart, 71, 72, 73, 77, 82
 Vingorla, 311, 325, 326, 329, 331, 332, 333
Wari, 142, 144, 150, 153, 154, 199
 Walwa, 142, 144, 145, 153, 154
 Wellesley, Lord, 11, 12, 13
 Wellington, Duke of, 16
 Wingate, Mr., 28, 29, 34, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 92, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 101, 107, 108, 120, 124, 126, 140, 160, 161, 162, 163, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 179, 203, 204, 218, 261, 262, 276, 311, 312, 313, 315, 317, 318, 329, 330, 331, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 355
Yawul, 48, 49, 50, 175, 177
 Yewut, 127

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